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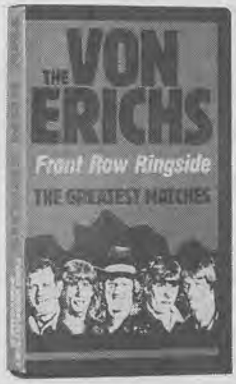


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# THE Wrestler

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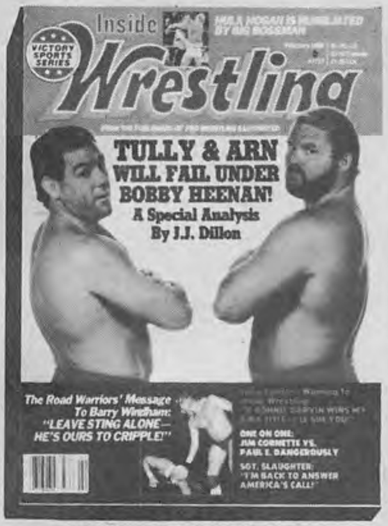


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# YOUR LETTERS

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## THE CHAMP WINS

The cover story of your May 1989 issue asked a very interesting question ("Rick Steamboat—Champion, Rick Steamboat—Challenger: Who's Better?"), but the answer is pretty obvious. Today's Steamboat is the NWA World champion, and he's never looked better. In fact, his ability to come back and almost immediately win a world title after taking a year off should be enough to qualify him as one of the greatest competitors of modern times.

NWA World champion Rick Steamboat is wrestling better than ever, in the opinion of reader John Milford.

The article took issue with the fact that The Honky Tonk Man, clearly the worst champion in the history of the sport, defeated Steamboat for the WWF Intercontinental title. Everybody seems to forget that Steamboat was distracted by the fact that his wife, Bonnie, was about to give birth to their first child. Anybody can have an off day, and that's what happened to Steamboat when Honky Tonk beat him.

I say an NWA champion the fans can look up to is long overdue. Even if his title reign proves to be short, Steamboat has the kind of inner greatness that transcends championships. For the first time in my life, I'm actually proud of a wrestler. And I'd bet that Steamboat is proud to be our champion, too.

JOHN MILFORD
Atlanta

## LOVE GONE SOUR

I am writing in response to the ridiculous letter by Arthur Packard in the May 1989 issue ("Love Power"). I can't believe a fan could be so small-minded! Packard had the gall to consider Brother Love the "savior" of the WWF. That preacher will be the downfall of the federation if he keeps his garbage up.

Is Brother Love the savior of the WWF? Correspondent Robert Huse thinks he could be the WWF's downfall.

All Love cares about is money. As for Roddy Piper and Jesse Ventura, they certainly know what wrestling is all about, and that's something Brother Love will never know. I hope Piper gets his hands on that obese charla-

tan when they meet face to face at WrestleMania V. If we're all lucky, the return of Piper will mean the demise of Brother Love. Good riddance!

ROBERT HUSE
Randolph Center, VT

**GENERAL CHAOS**

For several years, Gen. Skandor Akbar, who I believe has the most evil mind in wrestling today, has failed to acquire indestructible wrestlers for his Devastation, Inc.

Sure, wrestlers like Bubba Rogers, One Man Gang, Kamala, and Black Bart were tough, but they simply weren't talented enough. Now, Akbar finally has a couple of guys in his stable worth bragging about.

It seems like only yesterday that Gary Young was an inexperienced rookie going nowhere in the UWF. He's sure come a long way since then! Young is now one of the most feared grapplers in the sport because of his perfect formula of science and rulebreaking.

On the other hand, Cactus Jack may not be the biggest man in the world, but he seems to have no regard for his own well-being, much less that of his opponents. The guy can shift from brawling to using scientific maneuvers in almost the blink of an eye, and that stuns many an opponent.

Young and Cactus Jack are responsible for running Eric Embry out of World Class, something nobody else has ever been able to accomplish. I have to give Akbar some credit for obtaining these two stars, but he won't get my full respect until he stops blaspheming this country.

DIANE SEALS
Jenks, OK

**THE OLD DAYS**

I was a WWF fan—or perhaps I should say *WWWF* fan—back when Chief Jay Strongbow and Fred Blassie were having their feud. I had to write to say that Matt Brock's "Looking Back" in the May 1989 issue brought back a lot of memories for me, and they were all good ones.

**Chief Jay Strongbow whips Fred Blassie into the ropes during a 1973 installment of their legendary feud. Reader Jerry Smith feels that Blassie and Strongbow were both far superior to most of today's top stars.**

I'll never forget when Blassie returned to the WWF in 1972. Most fans I know only remember Blassie as a manager, but I remember when he was a wrestler. He was without a doubt the most frightening man I've ever seen. He was known as "The Vampire" in those days, and he had a penchant for biting into the necks, eyes, and foreheads of his opponents. I guess he liked the taste of Strongbow's blood, because they feuded violently for years! I was at the Boston Garden for one of their classic battles, and I'll never forget it as long as I live.

Frankly, I think either Blassie or Strongbow could have wiped the mat with any of today's stars. They didn't have huge bodybuilder physiques, but they were the toughest men I've ever seen. I only wish those kind of wrestlers were still around today.

JERRY SMITH
Springfield, MA

**VICIOUS RESPONSE**

I just had to write to respond to the article on Sid Vicious in your May 1989 issue ("Future Champion Or Hollow Potential? What Sid Vicious Must Know To Reach The Top"). I've seen Vicious wrestle, and I must admit that I'm impressed. But he's only a rookie, for goodness sake! Why must everybody rush the guy?

I'm really afraid that Vicious may have already blown his chance. He's been managed by Gen. Skandor Akbar and by Robert Fuller, but neither of those men will ever come close to leading *anyone* to a world title. What Vicious needs to do is realize that if he's ever going to make it big in the wrestling world, he's got to do it on his own.

Another thing he shouldn't do is take advice from guys like Dan Spivey, Bam Bam Bigelow, or Sting. What titles have those guys ever

*(Continued on page 44)*

# WHAT'S HAPPENING!

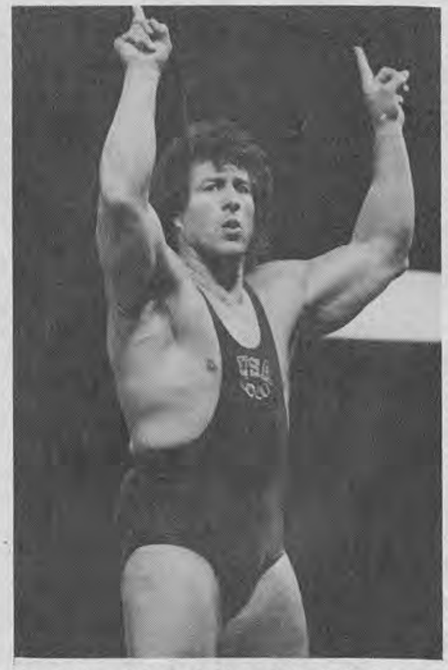
**By BILL APTER**

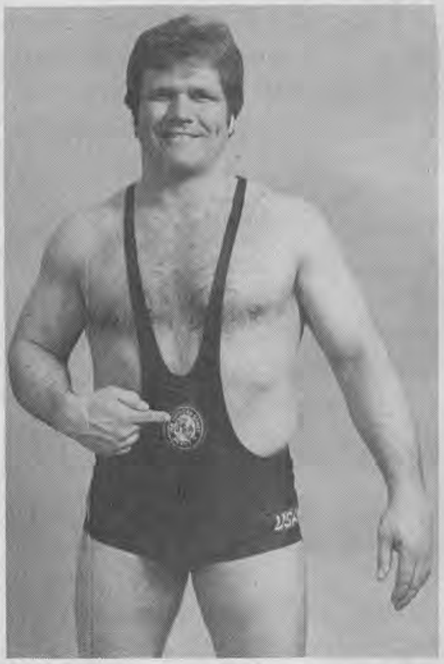
THE ONE-YEAR title reign of **Pat Tanaka** and **Paul Diamond** as AWA World tag team champions came to an end on March 25 in Rochester, Minnesota, with an upset loss to **Ken Patera** and **Brad Rheingans**.

**The Olympians**' victory was the unlikely result of a controversial series of events. Diamond tossed Rheingans into referee **Gary DeRusha**, knocking him to the ringside floor. Diamond then held Rheingans while Tanaka prepared to smash him with a foreign object. But Rheingans moved out of the way, Tanaka smashed Diamond by mistake, Rheingans covered Diamond, and Patera rolled DeRusha into the ring to make the count.

Afterward, Tanaka and Diamond argued, leading many to believe that **Bad Company** is on the verge of a split. Manager **Diamond Dallas Page** denied that there were any problems between his wrestlers and said Tanaka and Diamond would bounce back quickly. But Patera, who appeared to be on the verge of retirement after a failed comeback in the WWF recently, wasn't so sure.

"Tanaka and Diamond were just waiting to get beaten," Patera said. "They've been lucky, they've had a lack of competition, and me and Brad were ready for them. They can have as many rematches as they want, but it won't matter. We're not gonna lose."





Ken Patera (above left) and Brad Rheingans (above right), known as The Olympians, are the new AWA World tag team champions. They defeated Bad Company—Pat Tanaka and Paul Diamond—on March 25 in Rochester, Minnesota.

Bad Company had won the belts from **The Rockers** on March 19, 1988, in Las Vegas.

**Davey Boy Smith** won the Stampede North American title from reinstated champion **Don Muraco** on March 24 in Calgary, despite the interference of **Harley Race**. Smith is wrestling singles while tag team partner **Dynamite Kid** contemplates retirement. Kid is still troubled by back and arm injuries he suffered back in 1987 . . . **Fabulous Phil Apollo** and **Stunning Eric Sbracchia** defeated **Joe Savoldi** and **Vic Steamboat** for the ICW tag

*(Continued on page 48)*

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# WIN LOSE OR DRAW

BY ANDY RODRIGUEZ

WHAT HAS happened to Danny Spivey? At one time Spivey was being touted as the sport's next superstar. Some even compared him favorably to Hulk Hogan. Now, any attempts to compare the two seem like a bad joke.

Spivey began his career as Starship Eagle, one-half of the team called American Starship. (His partner was Scott Hall, then known as Starship Coyote.)

In 1985, he entered the WWF as Dan Spivey. Around that time, Mike Rotundo was looking for a partner because Barry Windham had returned to the NWA. The two hooked up and became the U.S. Express. They enjoyed moderate success until Rotundo decided to return to the NWA.

Spivey lingered in the WWF, then moved out as an independent. With tours of duty in Japan and Puerto Rico, he reestablished himself as a fine singles wrestler. Another shot at the big time was approaching.

Then Kevin Sullivan showed up.

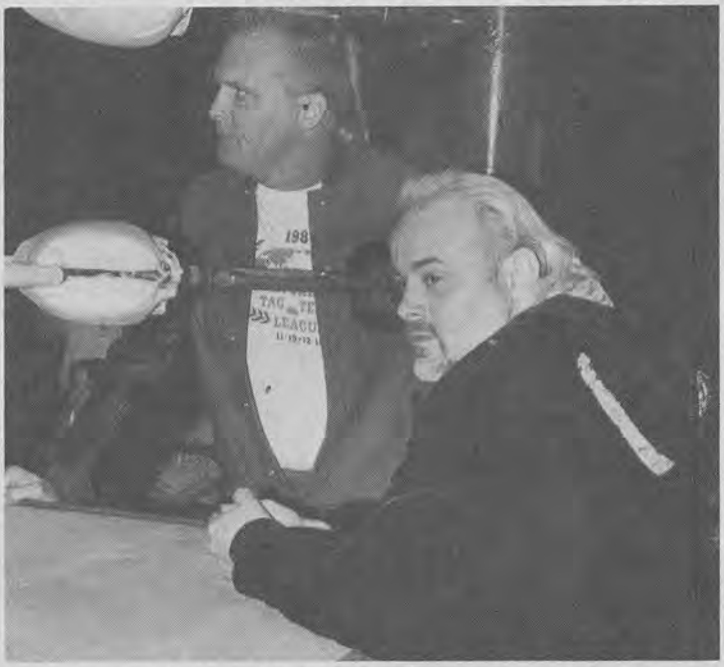
With Rick Steiner's departure from The Varsity Club, Sullivan wanted to shore up his group with a new addition. Not only was Spivey an outstanding pro and an old partner of Rotundo's, he had impeccable collegiate credentials, having lettered in wrestling at the University of Georgia. The only problem, from Sullivan's standpoint, was that Spivey was too nice a guy.

So, just as he changed the attitudes of Rotundo and Steve Williams, Sullivan changed Spivey. The Varsity Club had a new member.

But Spivey has changed more than mentally; he's a different person *physically*. His long blond hair has been cut short and spiked. His chiseled physique has dissolved into a massive gut. Clearly, this is *not* the next Hulk Hogan.

"Who cares about what people expect?" Spivey screamed. "I ain't lookin' to be nobody but 'Dangerous' Dan Spivey! I don't give a damn about expectations! The Club is all that matters. Kevin and the guys are like my family."

"There was nothing wrong with Dan Spivey that the proper motivation couldn't fix," Sullivan says. "He merely needed some guidance. That's what I have provided him with—guidance. He was a great athlete being limited by those who professed to be his friends, but how could they have been friends? Only now is Dan among friends."



Dan Spivey and Kevin Sullivan are ringside for another Varsity Club bout. Sullivan's influence has dramatically changed the talented Spivey in terms of both looks and style.

Despite Sullivan's influence Spivey is still a fine wrestler, but he subverts his skills with displays of brawling. That style fits the Sullivan mold perfectly. Even Rotundo, a stellar scientific wrestler, says he'd rather use his fists than wrestle cleanly.

"The most important thing that Kevin has taught me, taught all of us as a matter of fact," Rotundo said, "is not to hold anything back, to go all-out each time out. That means not always wrestling according to the rules. When Danny

*(Continued on page 52)*

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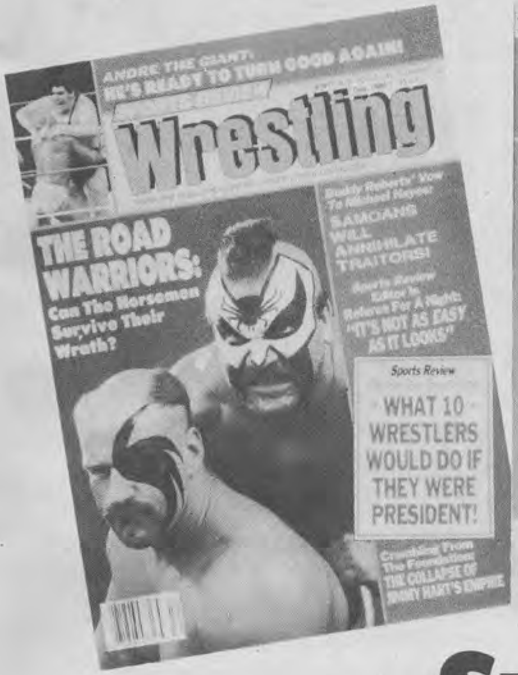

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# BLINDSIDED

BY BOB SMITH

I'VE BEEN GETTING a lot of letters lately claiming that I hate the WWF. After my recent columns damning the insidious presences of the Hebners and Brother Love, many readers assume that I'm *totally* anti-WWF.

This is not true! Any federation that features talent like Hulk Hogan, Ted DiBiase, Bret Hart, and Curt Hennig is always going to keep my attention. Plus, the current feud between The Rockers and The Brain Busters has featured some of the greatest tag team matches of the past 20 years. I enjoy quality wrestling, and lately the WWF has had as much as (or more than) any other federation.

*Colossus of Death vs. Jerry Lawler*

And it bothers me that a majority of the fans blame the WWF as being the circuit that was first responsible for featuring a host of cartoonish wrestlers. Many fans don't appreciate the flamboyant ring antics of The Honky Tonk Man, Brutus Beefcake, and Akeem. Neither do I, frankly, but I can remember some old-time wrestlers who were so ridiculous they made these WWF stars look as bland as Frank Gotch.

The following men, as colorful as they were, were some of the most disgusting spectacles ever seen in this sport. It's amazing how far some competitors will go to try and intimidate an opponent. So, without further ado, here is "Blindsided's" official list of the five most ridiculous wrestlers ever. I still can't believe these guys were allowed anywhere near a pro ring—or that people paid good money to see them.

***The Mummy:*** "How can you hurt a man who's already dead?" asked preliminary wrestler Mike Hull after being defeated by this bandaged, fright-wigged specimen in 1971. This huge idiot claimed he was the reincarnation of the son of one of the pharaohs of Egypt. *Sure,* Mummy. When an opponent hit this stiff, dust would fly all over the ring, as if Mummy had been buried for thousands of years. Hopefully, this all-time dumbest of the dumb ideas will stay buried for a few thousand more.

***The Convict:*** Another tall man and tall tale. The 7'4", 400-pound Convict, who wrestled in California in the late '60s, claimed he had broken out of jail, and that's why he wrestled from head to toe in a striped prison outfit, complete with matching mask. I know, just like Big Bossman—but Bossman really was a corrections officer at one point. The only thing the Convict could get arrested for was impersonating a wrestler.

***The Battman:*** Tony Marino was one of the most talented wrestlers of the '60s. But for some reason, this scientific grappler put on a blue cape and cowl in a weak impersonation of the popular TV and comic-book hero of the day. Thankfully, Marino soon saw the error of his ways, and wrestled under his own name again. Holy career mistake!

***The Spaceman:*** In the early '60s, the country was caught up in the height of the burgeoning space race. Frank Hickey, who probably could have never made it under his own name, decided to come into the ring wearing a full space outfit complete with helmet. I hope this guy remains lost in orbit.

***The Colossus of Death:*** We can blame Jimmy Hart for this one. Back in 1983, the manager unleashed this huge man upon the Mid-Southern area. Colossus looked like fright film legend Tor Johnson, but he wrestled more like Lady Bird Johnson. Fans booed, and not because he was a rulebreaker; he looked ridiculous.

These guys made a big splash at first, but hardly anybody remembers these bozos now—and *everybody* remembers Jack Brisco, Bruno Sammartino, and Verne Gagne, the *real* talents during those years.

I wonder which category The Honky Tonk Man will be in 20 years from now. ☐

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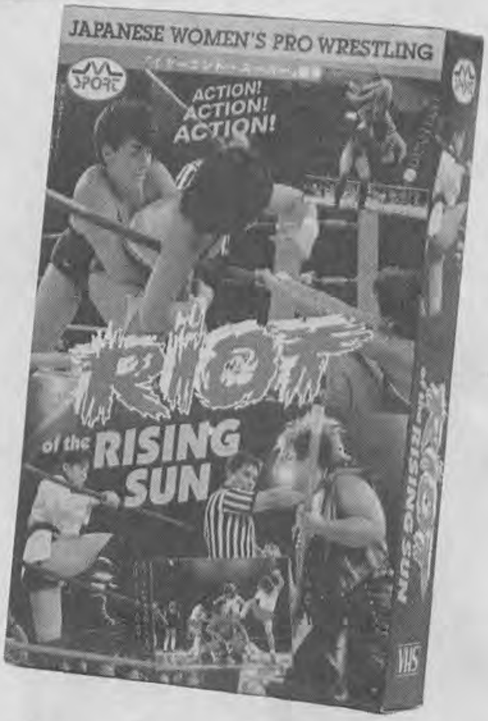


## Sample The Excitement!

Jaguar Yokota, The Crush Girls, Devil Masami, The Jumping Bomb Angels, Dump Matsumoto—these are the legends of Japanese women's wrestling. They're all here, and more—including American superstar Wendi Richter. These matches, direct from Japanese television, include the kind of action that, until now, only satellite dish owners or Japanese fans could enjoy. These tapes are certain to become valued collectors' items. They include *complete* matches, not match excerpts!

### Slant-Eyed Slaughter

(running time: approximately 70 minutes)

- Wendi Richter & "Devil" Masami vs. Ayumi "Jumbo" Hori & Okumura
- Nancy Kumi vs. Lucy Kayama
- Monster Ripper & "Devil" Masami vs. Ayumi "Jumbo" Hori & Mimi Hagiwara
- "Jaguar" Rimi Yokota vs. Tarantula
- "Crush Girl" Lioness Asuka vs. "Crush Girl" Chigusa Nagayo

### Riot Of The Rising Sun

(running time: approximately 70 minutes)

- Yukari Omori & Ayumi "Jumbo" Hori vs. Noriyo Tateno & Itysuki Yamasaki—"The Jumping Bomb Angels"
- Masked You & Kaoru "Dump" Matsumoto vs. Lioness Asuka & Chigusa Nagayo—"The Crush Girls"
- "Jaguar" Rimi Yokota vs. Las Galactia
- "Jaguar" Rimi Yokota vs. "Devil" Masami

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# Thumbs Up

Each issue, *The Wrestler* will praise the noteworthy and damn those who violate the honor of wrestling. The praiseworthy receive a Thumbs Up, the disgraceful are marked with a Thumbs Down. Here is this month's roll of honor and shame.

*Thumbs Up* to Dusty Rhodes. Many people claimed Rhodes' career was drawing to a close, but the veteran proved he's still one of the world's greatest wrestlers by defeating massive U.S. Steel to win the first PWF title on March 11 in Tampa, Florida. Fans wondered whether Rhodes made the right choice by leaving the NWA at the height of his popularity, but his return to Florida has clearly rejuvenated his career. On top of that, the "Homecoming" card will surely rank as one of the finest events of 1989. Welcome back, Dusty. You're living proof that the "American Dream" will never die.

*Thumbs Up* to Eddie Gilbert. And while we're at it, we'll give one to Missy Hyatt, too. Wrestling's "First Family" is back, but with a big difference—they're now showing they can be decent, kind-hearted people. They've "adopted" Rick Steiner, a confused young man in serious need of guidance. Almost as soon as that happened, Gilbert and Steiner won the U.S. tag team title from Kevin Sullivan and Steve Williams. But that's only part of the good news. Gilbert seems far removed from the rulebreaker who terrorized the CWA and CWF last year. We hope we never see *that* Eddie Gilbert again!

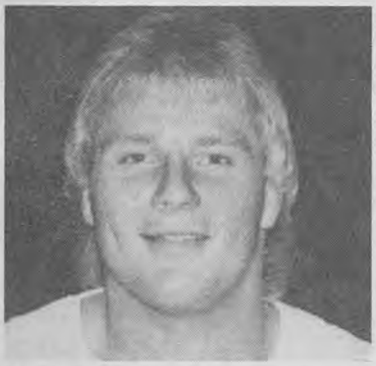
*Thumbs Up* to Ken Patera. This is another man who was written off prematurely by many fans. Since arriving in the AWA, Patera seems to have regained the fighting spirit that once made him the WWF Intercontinental champion. He's also formed a terrific new tag team with Brad Rheingans called The Olympians, and they've ended the year-long reign of rulebreaking AWA tag team champions Pat Tanaka and Paul Diamond. Most importantly, Patera has vowed never to forsake the fans. He's proven once again that he's a man all Americans can look up to.

*Thumbs Up* to Gordon Clement. Most federation presidents don't even inform the fans when a wrestler leaves the fold, but Clement is a breed apart. On a recent telecast of *Southern Championship Wrestling From Georgia*, not only did Clement wish Ranger Ross well on his new stint in the NWA, but he presented the former Army sergeant with a beautiful plaque honoring his accomplishments in the SCW area. Clement showed the kind of class and integrity the wrestling world could use a bit more of these days. SCW may be an independent federation, but their actions were major league all the way.

# Thumbs Down

*Thumbs Down* to Michael Hayes. Once a Freebird, always a Freebird. We should have known that Hayes would never be able to resist the temptation of joining Hiro Matsuda and his band of mercenaries. On March 14, Hayes shocked his Atlanta fans by turning against his tag team partner, Lex Luger. Four days later, Hayes nearly killed young Joey Maggs during a singles match, and later aided Barry Windham in attacking Luger again. It never fails to amaze us how the lure of big money can turned a fan favorite into a ruthless killer. Hayes may be richer in pocket, but he's poorer in soul.

*Thumbs Down* to Lanny Poffo. When Poffo got into the ring recently to read one of his poems, he took the opportunity to blast Hulk Hogan and his fans. Poffo has had a disappointing career in the WWF, and now it appears he's going to vent his frustrations by becoming a rulebreaker. This is a more important development than it would seem, as Poffo and his brother, Randy Savage, were once one of the most brutal tag teams in the Memphis area. Is this a signal that Savage and Poffo will soon reunite? We shudder to think of the consequences.



*Thumbs Down* to David Sammartino. How could you do this to your father, David? When the son of the two-time former WWF champion entered the Southern Championship area recently, he had a crop of blond hair on his head. But we could accept that. What we *couldn't* accept was when David joined Mr. Altanta in attempting to cripple many of the SCW's top stars. The younger Sammartino is turning out to be one of the most vicious men in wrestling, and his conduct is a far cry from the bastion of integrity his father was. We implore you, David—turn back before it's too late!

*Thumbs Down* to Eric Embry. We realize that Embry is now very popular in World Class, but that doesn't excuse his recent actions. Embry lost a loser-leave-WCCW match to Gary Young, but he continued to wrestle throughout the territory, claiming he was fulfilling "contractual obligations." In one of those matches, he defended his World Class light heavyweight title—against 375-pound Botswana Beast! World Class prides itself on its tough rules and regulations, but Embry openly flaunts them. When a man is supposed to leave a territory, he should be banished—no questions asked! □

# CORRESPONDENTS REPORTS

**Edmonton, Alberta** ***(Correspondent—Lynda Musiowsky):*** An exciting card at the Northlands Coliseum featured "Macho Man" Randy Savage against Bad News Brown in a Harlem street fight. In this type of match, the wrestlers are allowed to bring anything they want into the ring.

It was an all-out brawl that began before the bell rang. Bad News attacked Savage with a garbage can and began punching him, knocking the champion off his feet. Then the match went outside the ring, where Brown continued to beat on "Macho Man." He had Savage in deep trouble after picking him up and dropping him on the guard railing.

As Savage was recuperating, Bad News went back to the locker room. A few moments later, he returned with an eight-foot-long table. He brought it into the ring and positioned it vertically in a corner.

When Randy crawled back into the ring, Bad News pounded on him. Finally, the champion got to his feet, but Brown threw him across the ring and rammed him into the table. Bad News attempted to finish off Savage by hitting him with a hockey stick.

Brown was later disqualified after throwing Savage out of the ring and ignoring the referee's order to allow his re-entry. After being declared the winner, "Macho Man" walked slowly back to the dressing room, clutching his ribs.

Bad News Brown blasts Randy "Macho Man" Savage. They recently met in a Harlem street fight. Savage retained his WWF World title, but took a beating in the process.

In other bouts: John Studd drew with Akeem . . . Bret Hart defeated The Honky Tonk Man . . . The Bushwhackers beat Jacques & Raymond Rougeau . . . Hercules Hernandez drew with Curt Hennig . . . The Blue Blazer defeated Nikolai Volkoff.

**Cicero, IL** ***(Correspondent—Scott Buckley):*** The main event saw Steve Regal defend the Windy City Wrestling heavyweight championship against "Jumpin'" Jim Brunzell.

Before the match began, Regal and his manager, Tony Montana, taunted the fans at ringside. Once the bell rang, however, the match was a textbook scientific struggle

*(Continued on page 62)*

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Q: "I have a question for Lex Luger: Will you give Sting a shot at your U.S. title? He really deserves the chance."—Bobby Duke, Meridian, MS

A: **"You're right, Sting *does* deserve a chance," Luger replied, "but it's not up to me to decide. If it were, I'd wrestle him in a minute. It's up to the championship committee. I'd like to get the message to them that I'll take on all comers, Sting included. He's a championship-caliber wrestler in my book. He's proven it many times against Ric Flair and Barry Windham. But he's never wrestled anybody like me. That would be his toughest test, facing up to the power of the 'Total Package.' "**

***

Q: "My question is for Jerry Lawler: Now that you've been banned from the AWA for life, do you plan to challenge Rick Steamboat to some NWA-World Class title unification matches?"—Jon Gillum, Battle Creek, MI

A: **"Jon, I've always been a fighting champion," Lawler said. "When I was AWA World champion, I put that title on the line in several different areas against many worthy contenders. The AWA may not care to admit it today, but I brought a lot of prestige to that belt. Now I'm the World Class champ, and I'll put this title up against anybody. That includes Steamboat, and Randy Savage in the WWF, too. In fact, I've already challenged both of them. But the way things are in wrestling now, I'll probably never get to wrestle them. That's sad, because in the end you fans are the ones who get cheated. The kind of unification match Kerry Von Erich and I had at SuperClash III may not happen again for a long time to come."**

Jerry Lawler says he would like to place his World Class title on the line against Randy Savage or Rick Steamboat.

# YOU ASKED US

This is the monthly feature that answers ALL your most important questions about the mat sport, the stars, and the feuds. Send us your most perplexing queries and we'll have them answered for you by the world's finest grapplers and most insightful mat reporters. Address your questions to: YOU ASKED US, c/o THE WRESTLER, P.O. Box 48, Rockville Centre, NY 11571.

***

Q: "I'd like to ask Pat Tanaka of Bad Company why he doesn't wrestle alone more often. I'll bet he could win Greg Gagne's AWA TV title if he decided to concentrate more on singles."—Gary Combes, Clifton, NJ

A: **"Why should I wrestle singles when Paul Diamond and I are the AWA World tag team champions?" Tanaka replied. "We've got a good thing going and I don't want to mess it up. Sure, I could beat Gagne. I could beat Larry Zbyszko for the World title, too, but tag wrestling is what I do best and what I like best. As long as we keep winning, there's no reason for a change. I'd like to see Paul and I go up against tag teams in other areas, too. That's a challenge I want more than a singles belt."**

Bad Company's Pat Tanaka cocks a fist at Mando Guerrero. Tanaka says he could win Larry Zbyszko's AWA World title, but is content to remain in tag team competition.

***

Q: "My question is for Eddie Gilbert: Why did you and Missy Hyatt adopt Rick Steiner? He is a grown man!"—Vickie Mullet, Sacramento, CA

A: **"Don't worry about Rick," Gilbert answered. "He's in good hands. Our only motivation for adopting him was love. We want to help him in any way we can. He's helped me, too, in my training. Kevin Sullivan really tried to mess up Rick's mind, but Sullivan doesn't have any influence anymore. Rick may not be 100 percent yet, but he knows a lot more than you'd think. He knows that The Varsity Club is up to no good, and he knows that I'm his friend. Together, with Missy's help, we're gonna be a great tag team, and**

*(Continued on page 63)*

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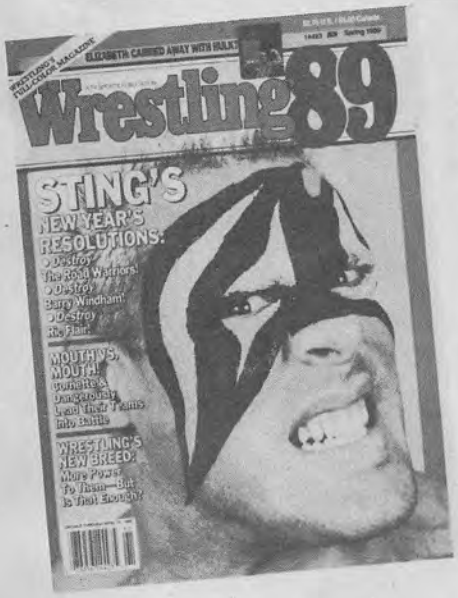


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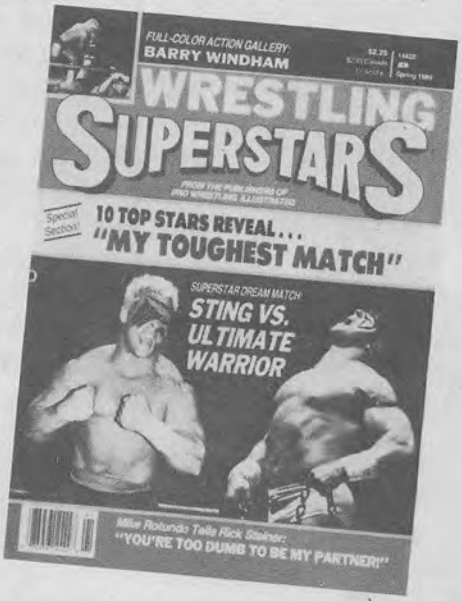


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# INTRODUCING

# LARRY CAMERON

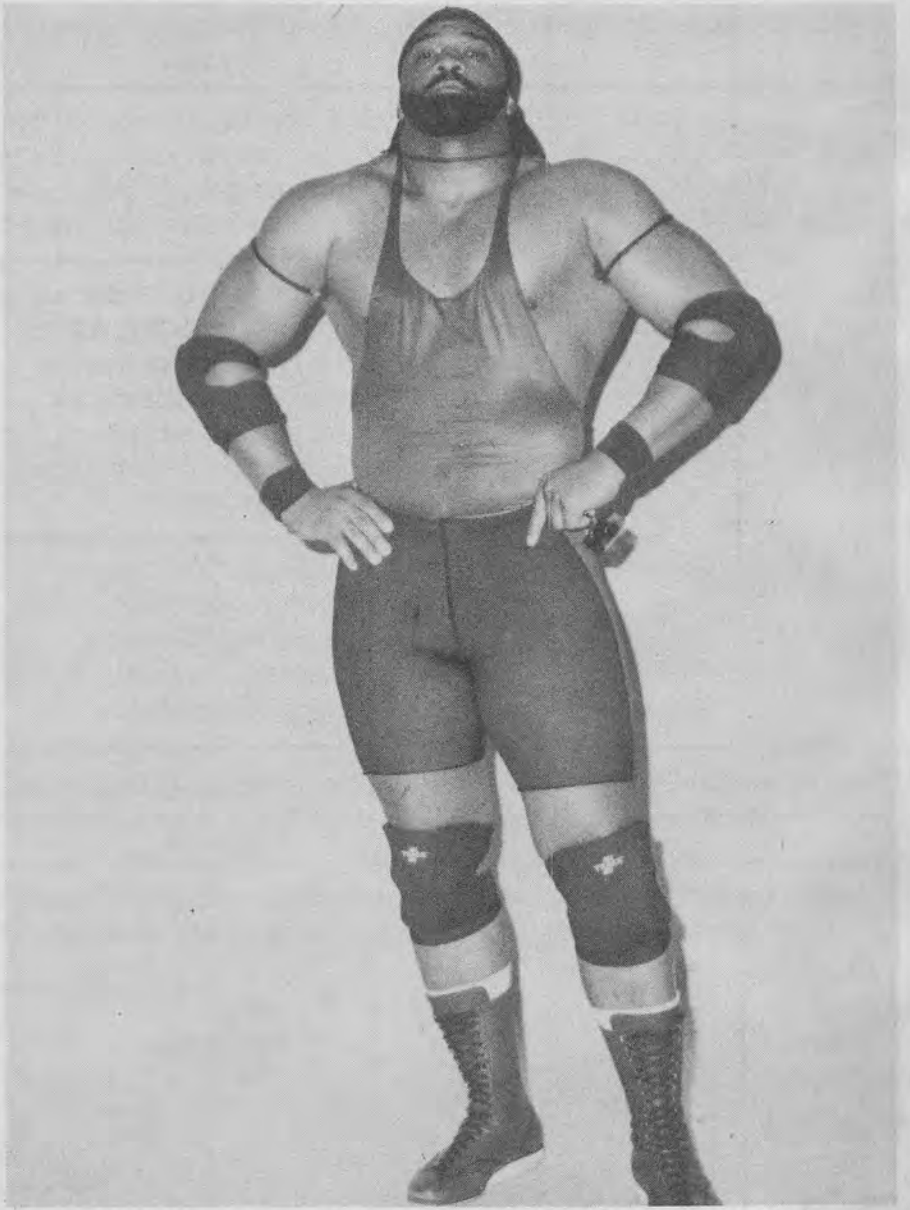
"CHICAGO TAUGHT ME how to be tough," claims Larry Cameron, the powerful young wrestler who's established himself as a top contender for the Stampede North American title. "The Road Warriors were right—if you're gonna make it in Chi-Town, you gotta be the baddest of the bad. And ain't nobody badder than I am."

Very few wrestlers can match this 6'1", 280-pound former bodybuilder in terms of power, and even fewer are willing to try. Cameron displays one of the most pronounced mean streaks of any wrestler to enter the pros in years. In fact, many of those in the sport already think he's the most violent man in wrestling.

"Now, you *know* I love big, nasty guys," said Paul E. Dangerously, who managed Cameron for a brief time last year in the Windy City area. "But Larry would get a little out of hand at times. There were moments when I thought he would tear the ring down—and he's definitely got the strength to do it!"

Cameron, 29, grew up the youngest of six children. His father, Isom Cameron, was a professional boxer who competed in small clubs and bars when Larry was growing up. Cameron still credits his father for giving him his fighting instinct.

*(Continued on page 58)*



**Muscular Larry Cameron is impressing fans throughout the Stampede area with his unique combination of roughhouse brawling and power maneuvers.**

**Larry Cameron is more than just another bodybuilder. This rising Stampede star is also gaining a deserved reputation as one of the meanest men in the sport. He claims he'll be the man to retire Don Muraco from wrestling permanently!**

# *COMING JUNE 13*

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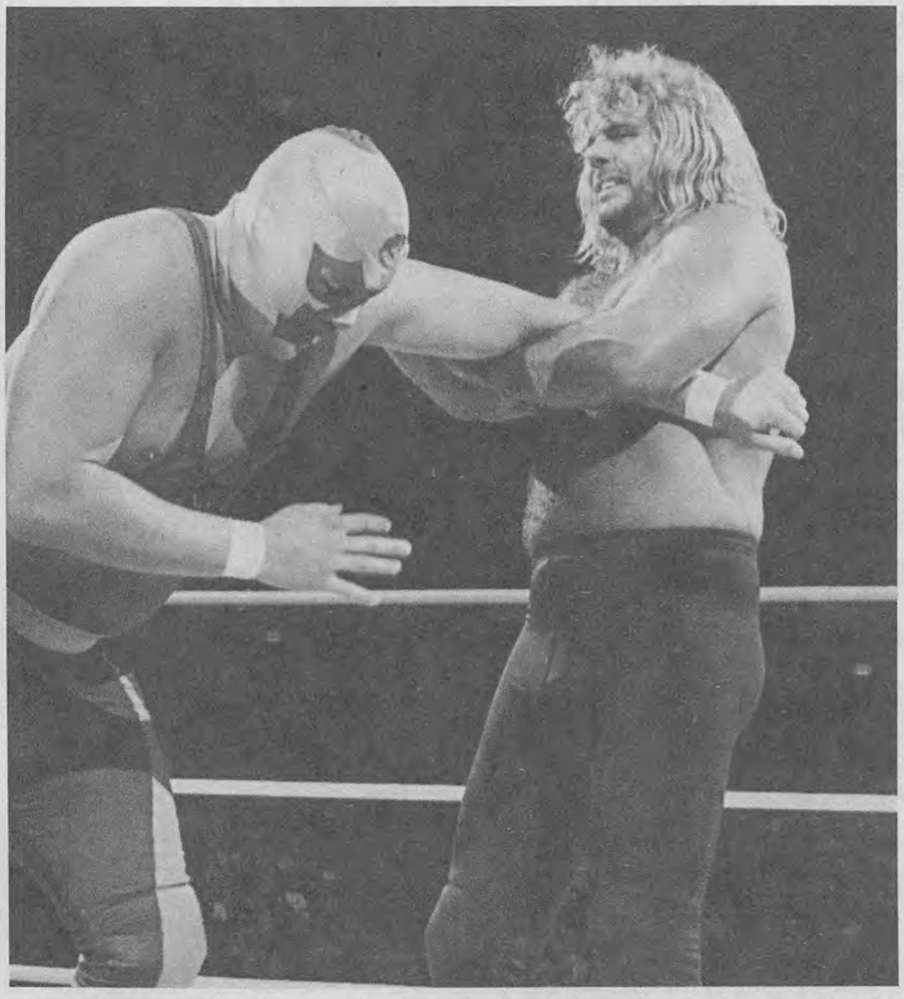
# Q&A

**Each month, *The Wrestler* will present a "Question and Answer" forum with an important figure in the wrestling world. It is your chance to meet wrestling's biggest stars as they answer the questions uppermost in the fans' minds**



Michael Hayes armlocks The Russian Assassin in a match before he turned rulebreaker again. As leader of The Freebirds, Hayes made a lot of enemies.

Q: Well, Michael, you're grinning from ear to ear, but as far as I'm concerned you've certainly got nothing to be proud about. And if you've managed to shock me with your recent actions, I'm sure the fans feel even worse than I do. Why, Michael?

**A: What kind of a question is that, *why?* Why *not,* Bobby? Since I returned to the NWA, I'd been on a one-way road to nowhere, baby. I wasn't getting any championship opportunities, and all I was doin' was getting involved in meaningless tag team matches. Hey, carrying Junkyard Dog through a 20-minute match is not my idea of fun, you know what I mean?**

Q: How can you insult the Dog like that? You two made a pretty good team. You didn't have to brutalize Luger just because you were unhappy.

**A: That's where you're mistaken, idiot. For months, Mr. Matsuda kept coming out to ringside during my matches, taking notes and gesturing that he wanted to talk to me. I kept running him off, because I was certain that he was just scouting me so that his men—Ric Flair, the Windhams, and Butch Reed—would have a better chance against me. But that's not what that shrewd dude had in mind at all! All along, he was trying to get my attention so that he could sign me to an exclusive, long-term contract**

# MICHAEL HAYES

**THE FANS WERE fooled for a long time, but now the public knows the score: Never trust a former Freebird.**

**Only a few months ago, Michael Hayes was working hard to convince the fans that he was a changed man. He insisted he never wanted to be known as one of the Fabulous Freebirds again, and had apologized for his rulebreaking past with Terry Gordy and Buddy Roberts. He wanted to be known simply as Michael "P.S." Hayes, rocker and wrestler of the first caliber.**

**Those days already seem like years ago. Without warning, Hayes is back busting heads again, and he's much more vicious than ever before. On March 14 in Atlanta, Hayes teamed with Lex Luger to face Kendall and Barry Windham, managed by Hiro Matsuda. After only a few minutes of action, Hayes got down on all fours behind Luger, enabling the Windhams to double-clothesline Luger to the canvas. After Barry scored the pinfall on the shocked Luger, Hayes and the Windhams teamed to batter Luger unmercifully.**

**Now, a host of questions have emerged. Has Hayes signed with Matsuda? Why did he turn against Luger? Will he now reform the Freebirds? Assistant Editor Bob Smith went to Atlanta to get the answers from the outspoken Hayes.**

---

**for more American money than I had ever seen in my whole life.**

Q: I take it that's what you did after you turned against Luger.

A: **Wrong again, scribe. I signed with Matsuda a couple of weeks *before* that tag team match. After that, I just bided my time, waiting for that moment when I could make a big impression, not only to the fans, but to Matsuda and his men as well.**

Q: You certainly did that. But why Lex Luger? What did the U.S. champion ever do to deserve that kind of treatment? Four days after you attacked him during that tag match, you blindsided him again in Philadelphia!

A: **At first, Luger was just in the wrong place at the wrong time. I wanted to make a big splash as a new member of Matsuda's Yamasaki Corporation. But now that I look back at it, I'm proud of what I've done, not to mention a whole lot richer. Luger symbolizes everything that's wrong with wrestling, Jack. He likes to flex and pose, but he ain't half as sexy as I am, and I don't even have to rip my shirt off to prove it. Now, he thinks he's king of the hill because he holds that U.S. title, but I'm just the man to knock him off that mountain. He calls himself the "Total Package," but that boy just ain't wrapped too tight.**

Q: Frankly, I think it's you who's a little bit off-balance. Doesn't it bother you that you've turned your back on millions of fans who looked up to you? I received a letter recently from a fan who said she was burning her copy of your *Off The Streets* album. Aren't you worried that you and your band may be losing some fans because you've reverted back to rulebreaking?

**Hayes executes a DDT on Joey Maggs. Hayes was particularly rough on Maggs in this bout that took place just days after he turned against Lex Luger. In that match, the former Freebird joined Barry and Kendall Windham to gang up on Luger.**

A: **What difference should that make? Hey, there isn't a fan in those arenas that wouldn't have done the**

**exact same thing I did. Money is all that matters, and anybody that says it doesn't is either a liar or completely stupid. Everybody is all up in arms about Matsuda because his Yamasaki Corporation is buying up property all over the United States, but they must be doin' something right to get to be so rich, right? Why should I turn down an opportunity to be one of wrestling's financial elite? To hear the cheers of the morons who come to my matches? Big deal! Now, I'm set for life, even if I decide never to wrestle another match the rest of my life. Plus, Matsuda also has connections to the music industry. He said that with his backers, me an' my Badstreet Band will be twice as popular than ever before. Imagine that!**

**Q:** Somehow, I doubt that's going to happen. Speaking of Badstreet, last year you said you would never again team with your former Freebird partners, Buddy Roberts and Terry Gordy, because they were continuing to wrestle as rulebreakers. Now, you've changed your stripes again. Will your new attitude lead to the reformation of the greatest six-man tag team of all time?

**A: Jeez, if you think the Freebirds were that good, we must have been doin' something wrong, huh? Actually, that's a pretty interesting question. Right now, Buddy is managing Beauty & The Beast in World Class, and Gordy's taking the Continental area by storm in between his successful Japanese tours. It wasn't never their wrestling philosophies that bothered me, either. Buddy openly plotted against me during a "Triple Dome of Terror" match last summer. I don't mind tellin' you that there's still a little bad blood between me and him. As far as Terry goes, I haven't talked to him in months. So if those guys ever wanted to tag up again, let *them* make the first move. They have to prove that I can trust 'em before I put my faith in 'em anymore. But like they say, never say never, right? Who knows what'll happen in the future?**

Hayes isn't through with Maggs yet. Furthermore, he hasn't discarded the idea that he, Terry Gordy, and Buddy Roberts might get back together again.

**Q:** What *is* going to happen? What are your plans now that you're part of the organization that's taking the NWA by storm?

**A: Well, Hiro has already gotten me a pretty good gig in being the new host of TBS'** ***World Championship Wrestling*** **. . .**

**Q:** Wait a second. Jim Ross is the host of that show! Your function is to provide color commentary, if I'm not mistaken.

**A: That's your opinion. If you look at the ratings since I started bein' on TV every week, you'd realize they're shooting up more than ever before. That's because the fans know I'm gonna be on every show. But as far as wrestling goes, there's a whole lot of options I have right now. Like I said before, I'm the man to take Luger's U.S. belt, but there's a lot of other things to do. Maybe me and Barry will team up and take those World tag team belts from The Road Warriors. Or maybe me and Kendall can team to take those U.S. tag belts from Rick Steiner and Eddie Gilbert. Better yet, maybe it's time I staked my claim as a World champion. Rick Steamboat looks to be easy pickins', doesn't he?**

**Q:** How can you possibly say that? Steamboat has been a fighting champion so far, and he's rolled

over all the competition he's faced.

**A: That's only because he hasn't faced me yet. Once he eats the canvas after getting caught in my DDT, he'll be handing that belt over to me on a silver platter. What makes this so nice is that any one of us in Hiro's army could get that World title. If Flair can't do it, I will. If I can't do it, Barry will. If Barry can't do it . . .**

Q: I get the point. But there's something fishy about your suddenly warm relationship with Flair, the Windhams, and Matsuda. By now, we all know the fans can't trust you, but can *you* trust your partners?

**A: Don't worry about ol' P.S., chum. For once in my life, I'm in the right place at the right time. I won't take a backseat to anybody no more. A lot of people were mourning the death of The Four Horsemen, but look at what's happening now! We've got me, Flair, Barry, Kendall, and Butch—and we're just getting started! Before you know it, we're gonna dominate the NWA like no fighting force before it. And I'm gonna dominate every opponent I come in contact with. Why shouldn't I trust these guys? Because they pay me twice as much as I was makin' before?**

Q: You certainly seem happy with everything, but I want to warn you about something. The fans used to hate you back during your Freebird days, but they seem to despise you twice as much now. Money isn't everything, Michael. It can't buy happiness—and it can't bring your fans back.

**A: Who cares? Money can buy me the finest babes, the finest booze, and the finest clothes. If that ain't happiness, what is? The only thing that could be better is feelin' a championship belt around my waist again. And believe me, Luger's gonna be the one that loses. As far as the fans go, well, I've got a message for 'em. Don't applaud—just throw money!** □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Wrestler SPOTLIGHTS...

**From time to time, *The Wrestler* will shine its spotlight on an outstanding wrestler, manager, or tag team. These are unforgettable highlights of the sport's greatest stars, compiled by the largest staff of editors and photographers in wrestling journalism**

# WAHOO McDANIEL

*STAYING IN TOP contention for any amount of time is a demanding task, but staying in top contention for more than 20 years is almost impossible—unless you're Wahoo McDaniel.*

*The Indian star has been one of the top grapplers in the sport since he started wrestling full-time in 1968. Prior to that he had wrestled during pro football's off-season, as he played for several NFL and AFL teams. Over the past 20 years, he has held many major titles, including the U.S. and National championships, the AWA World tag team title (with Crusher), and the Southern title. The one goal he hasn't achieved, however, is a world title.*

*"Thankfully, the AWA is giving me title shots at Larry Zbyszko," McDaniel says. "They recognize that even though I may be getting up there in years, I'm still one of the best wrestlers in this entire sport. Zbyszko may laugh, but he'll never have an easy match with me. I feel as good as I ever have."*

*The pursuit of a world championship is not the only thing that drives McDaniel. For the past year he has been engaged in a nasty feud with Manny Fernandez, although the rivalry actually goes back many years. Their bouts have been some of the most bloody and brutal ever seen in the AWA. And the level of violence increases when they meet in an Indian strap match, a McDaniel specialty.*

*"Everybody knows I'm the master of the Indian strap match," McDaniel boasted. "I've never lost one; you can check the record. Fernandez goes into those matches thinking he has some magic formula, but he doesn't have a clue what to do in there. Even at SuperClash III, when he thought he had me beat, I came back. I* **always** *do."*

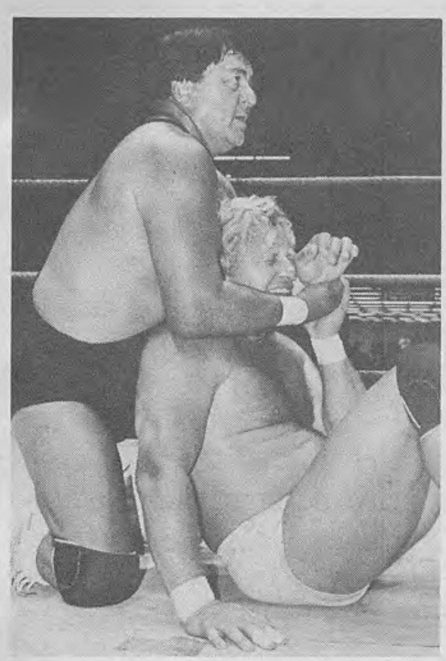
**Before he became a professional wrestler, Wahoo McDaniel played football in the NFL and AFL. That experience helped him greatly in the ring.**

*"What makes Wahoo so great, I think, is pride in his Indian heritage," said nine-time former AWA champ Verne Gagne. "He gets very mad if someone insults his ancestors. He feels he has a great tradition to uphold when he steps through the ropes, and that shows when he wrestles. I'd be so proud of him if he won that title from Zbyszko."*

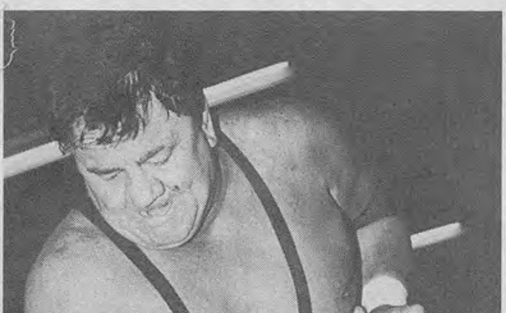
*"Wahoo, I'll tell you this," Zbyszko said. "you were a legend, I* **am** *a legend. I have it all, you have nothing. You want this belt around my waist more than anything, but you can't take it. Do you know why? It's because you're too old! Too old, too slow, and too fat. And that pile of feathers you wear on your head doesn't help any."*

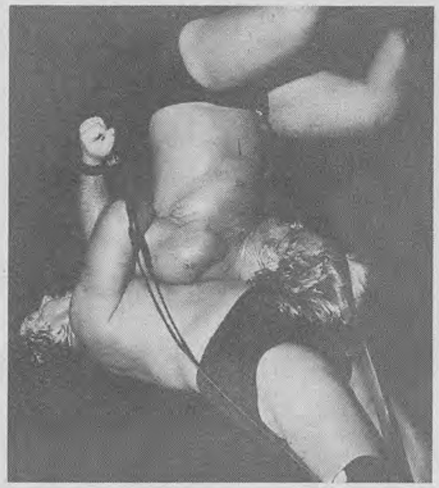
*"Zbyszko's gonna eat those words real soon," Wahoo said. "Then maybe when that belt's around* **my** *waist, he'll remember what it feels like to have to beg for a title match. Sure, I'll give him a rematch, but maybe I'll just make him wait a little while."*

*Whether battling Fernandez in a strap match or contesting Zbyszko for the World title, Wahoo McDaniel will be giving maximum effort.* ***The Wrestler*** *is proud to take this special look at his fabulous career.* □



July 1983: McDaniel chinlocks AWA World champion Nick Bockwinkel (above). September 1988: Wahoo wristlocks Jerry Lawler in another AWA World title match (below). McDaniel is consistently a contender for the World championship.



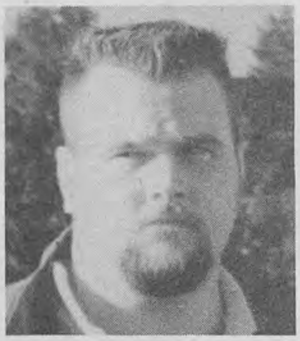


July 1975: Wahoo executes an abdominal stretch on Jack Brisco (above). December 1976: In an Indian strap match, McDaniel suplexes Greg Valentine (right). Wahoo is a master of the strap match.

December 1988: McDaniel whips Manny Fernandez across the ring on his way to winning their strap match at SuperClash (right). The Wahoo-Fernandez feud has been one of the AWA's top attractions.

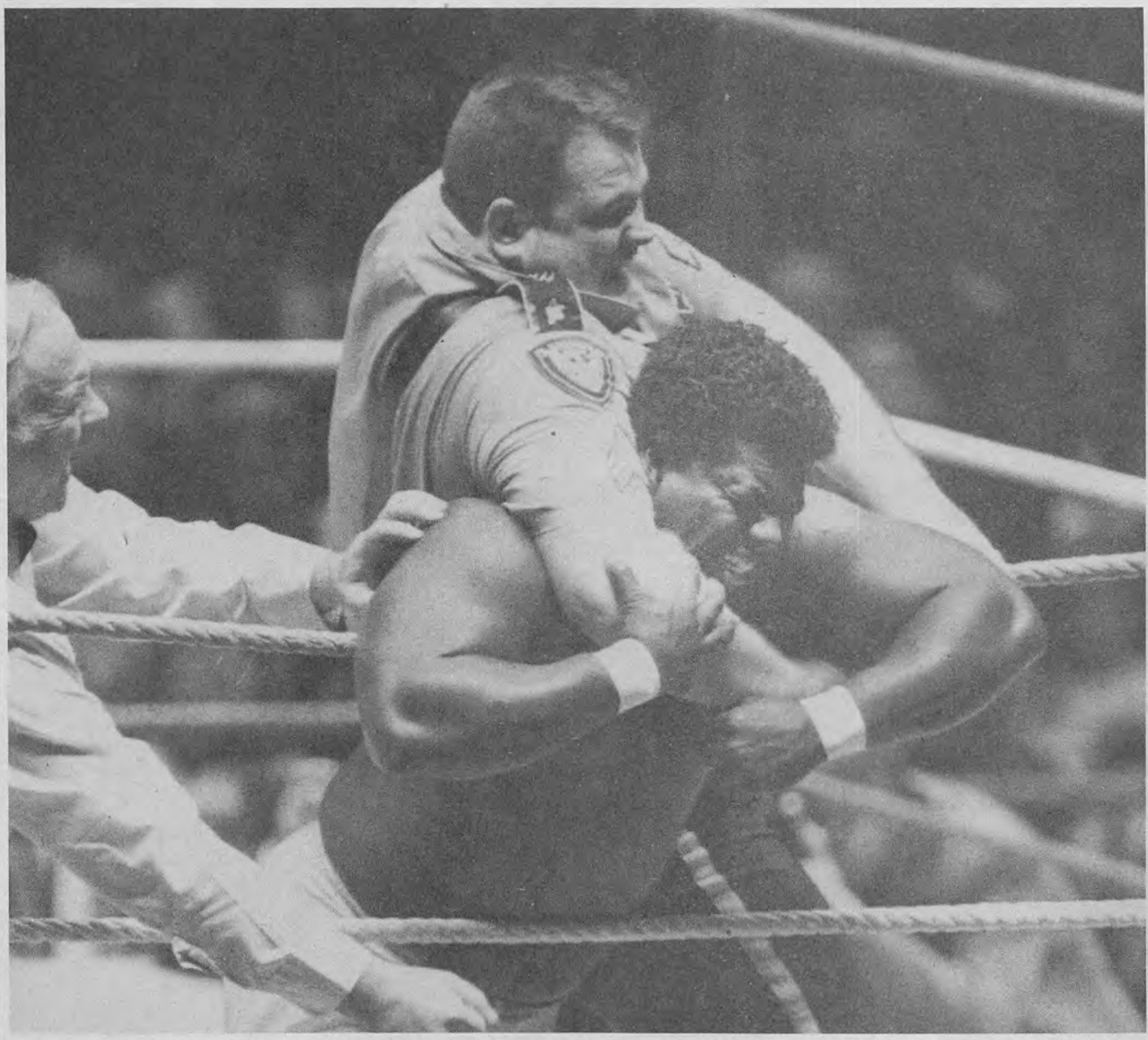
# X-RAY

THE WRESTLER PANEL EXAMINES



## BIG BOSSMAN

**Each month THE WRESTLER'S panel of experts will offer their candid opinions of one of wrestling's stars. Whether an up-and- coming youngster or an established superstar in his own right, our panel will always be frank and honest without fear of reprisal**



Big Bossman throttles Koko B. Ware on the ropes. Bossman is a brutally sadistic competitor whose style often results in disqualification. Nevertheless, he has been at the top of the WWF rankings for several months, and is sure to remain there for a long time to come.

**CAPT. LOU ALBANO**

"As I've said before, I've managed all kinds of wrestlers, and there are very few who scare me, but Bossman is definitely one of them. *Ugh!* This is a terrifying creature, daddy, from the flat top of his head right down to his steel-tipped prison boots. Somebody's gotta get that big, ugly nightstick out of that monster's hands, too, or someday he's gonna put some fan favorite out of wrestling—and it might even be Hulk Hogan or The Ultimate Warrior, baby."

Capt. Lou Albano, long known as "The Guiding Light," has guided 13 tag teams to an unmatched 16 WWF World tag team titles.

**KILLER KOWALSKI**

"Finally, a young wrestler worth shouting about! I liked him back when he was known as Big Bubba Rogers, but now he's even more impressive. Who else could pick up that overrated Hogan and slam him all over the ring like he was nothing? Only Bossman has been able to do it. Mark my words, this fine, law-abiding citizen is going to be either the WWF World or Intercontinental champion before 1989 is over. His kind of talent can't be denied."

Killer Kowalski, one of the most sadistic rulebreakers in the sport's history, runs a wrestling school in Reading, Massachusetts.

**PROF. TORU TANAKA**

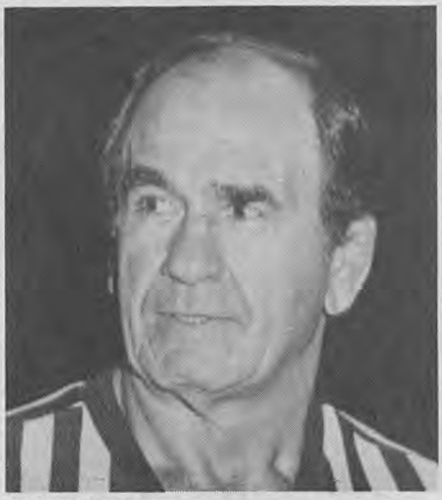
"Very big, very fat, and very American—but very, very good as well. Instead of pandering to the fans or worrying about ridiculous rules, Bossman only listens to himself. When he wants to handcuff his opponent to the rope, he does it. When he wants to hurt someone, he does it. He shows the kind of self-discipline that makes a great wrestler. If he continues to develop the way he has the past year, he could be the most feared man in the sport."

Prof. Tanaka, a three-time co-holder of the WWF World tag team title with Mr. Fuji, is currently a successful actor.

**LARRY HENNIG**

"I've got to hand it to today's young stars. When I was starting out, I was considered one of the biggest men in the sport, but Bossman makes me look like a midget. Bossman is already capable of cleaning the mat with everybody. I think he could destroy Randy Savage—he almost did once already—and he'd stuff Rick Steamboat up one nostril and out the other. And to think he's still in his early 20s! Bossman's future seems brighter than anyone else I can think of."

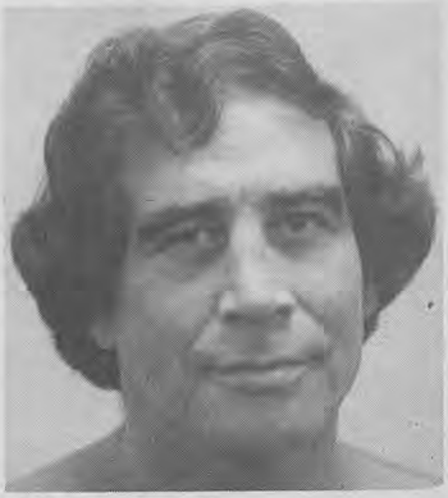
Larry "The Ax" Hennig is a four-time former AWA World tag team champion; he held three of those titles with Harley Race.



**LOU THESZ**

"Big, strong, powerful, and surprisingly quick—that's Big Bossman. Unfortunately, he seems to think he's still a Georgia corrections officer, and that's a big problem. I'd bet that Bossman gets disqualified in at least a third of the matches he competes in. He'll never be a serious contender for a title with his attitude. Also, he's getting bad management advice from Slick, and he's carrying around about 35 pounds of weight he should really lose."

Lou Thesz held the NWA World title six times during his fabulous 50-year career. Many consider him the greatest all-round wrestler in history.



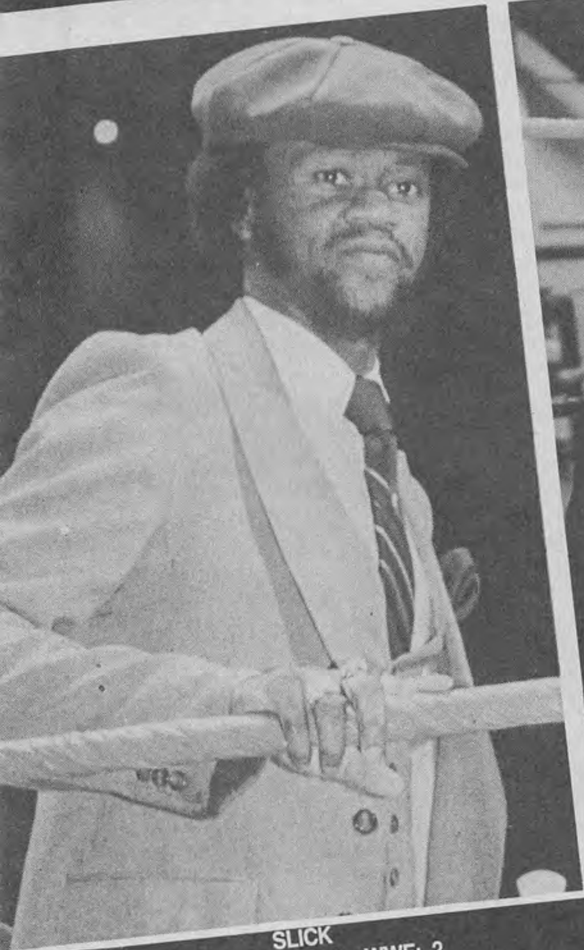
**JACK BRISCO**

"Out of all the recent big men in the sport—and this includes Ultimate Warrior, U.S. Steel, and Sid Vicious—I'd say that Bossman has the greatest potential. He doesn't realize it, but his image is cheapening his greatness as a wrestler. He should try to *defeat* his opponents instead of trying to *punish* them all the time. When he gets that wild look in his eyes, you can tell he's about to go overboard. He's in need of some serious counseling."

Jack Brisco is a two-time former NWA World champion, and a three-time former NWA World tag team champion with brother Jerry.

## Memo To WWF Wrestlers:

# THINKING OF MANAGER?



SLICK
Years managing in WWF: 2
Titles at press time: 0

BOBBY HEENAN
Years managing in WWF: 5
Titles at press time: 0

FRENCHY MARTIN
Years managing in WWF: 1
Titles at press time: 0

**Many WWF wrestlers have put their faith in men like Bobby Heenan, Jimmy Hart, and Slick. But these managers have failed to lead their proteges to greatness. Perhaps hiring a manager isn't such a good idea after all!**

By Matt Brock

IT WAS ONE of the biggest stories of 1988. Only two months after losing his AWA World title to Jerry Lawler on May 9, Curt Hennig announced that he would be leaving the AWA for the WWF.

Immediately, the speculation began. Whom would Hennig choose as his manager? Would he look to the veteran cunning of Bobby

# HIRING A DON'T BOTHER!

*Photos by David Fitzgerald*

JIMMY HART
Years managing in WWF: 4
Titles at press time: 0

MR. FUJI
Years managing in WWF: 5
Titles at press time: 0

Heenan? The devious mind of Mr. Fuji? The cool calculating of the stylish Slick?

It's eight months later now, and Hennig has fooled everybody—he never chose a manager at all. Hennig is as intelligent as any competitor in the sport, and he decided that he could handle his career all by himself.

He's not the only one. Bad News Brown hasn't hired a manager in the WWF. Neither has Ted DiBiase. Or Ronnie Garvin.

They're the smart ones. Today's WWF managers may be more famous than many of the wrestlers they guide, but they have another common bond:

Failure.

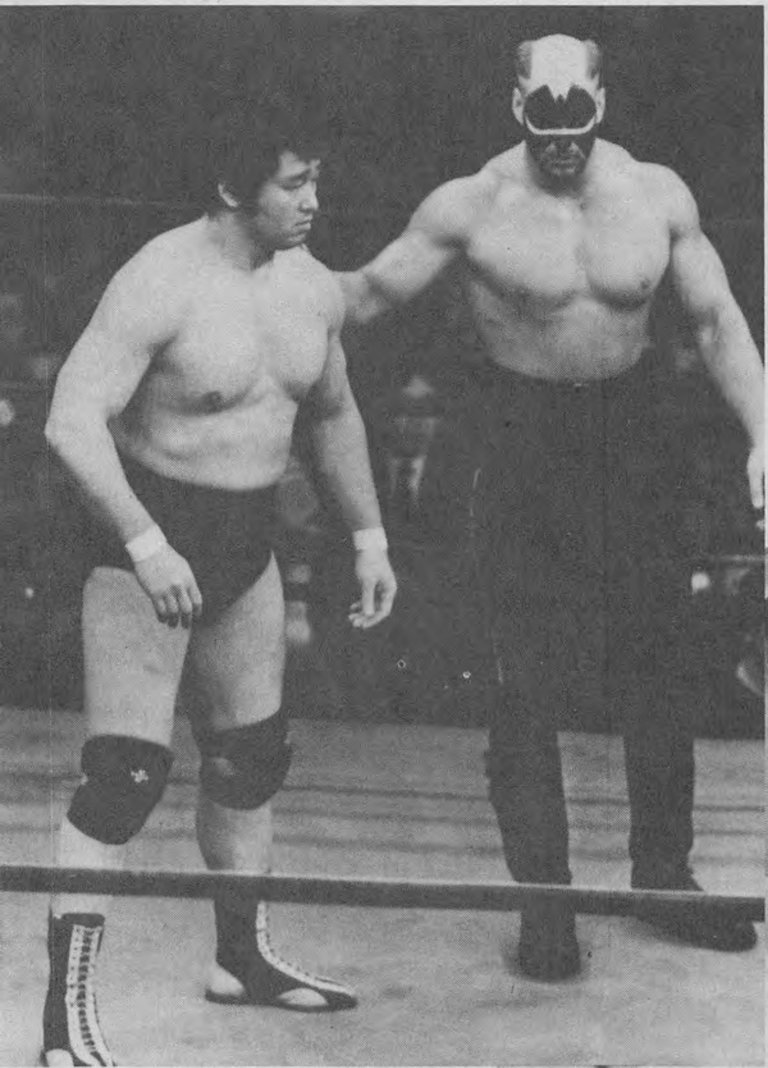
Years ago, the WWF's roster of managers was much smaller than it is now, but it was much more successful. Lou Albano managed 12 teams to 16 WWF World tag team championships, and led Ivan Koloff to the WWF World title. The Grand Wizard managed two WWF champions and two Intercontinental champions. Fred Blassie managed The Iron Sheik to the World belt.

Those lucky enough to be under the guidance of these legendary managers knew they would receive title shots, and more often than not they received main-event status just a few months after their arrival in the federation. Today, Bobby Heenan, Slick, Mr. Fuji, Frenchy Martin, and Jimmy Hart are considered to be the federation's top managers, but as of press time *none* of them managed a WWF champion.

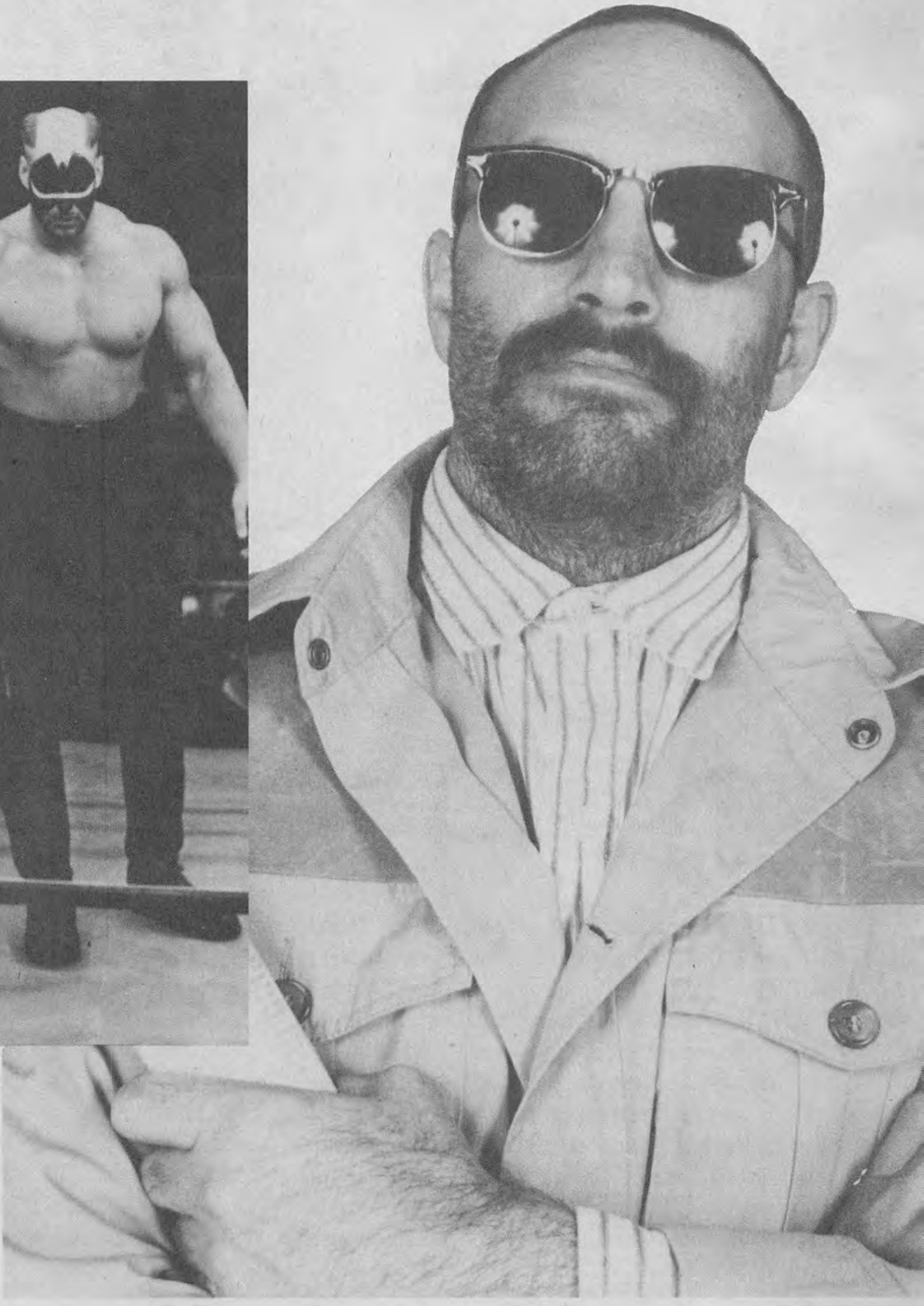
*(Continued on page 50)*

# *The Legion Of Doom's Japanese Odyssey*

# WHY



Genichiro Tenryu and Hawk hold the NWA World six-man title along with Animal, but on a recent tour of Japan, they wrestled without the other Road Warrior.



# PAUL ELLERING SPLIT UP THE ROAD WARRIORS

By Craig Peters

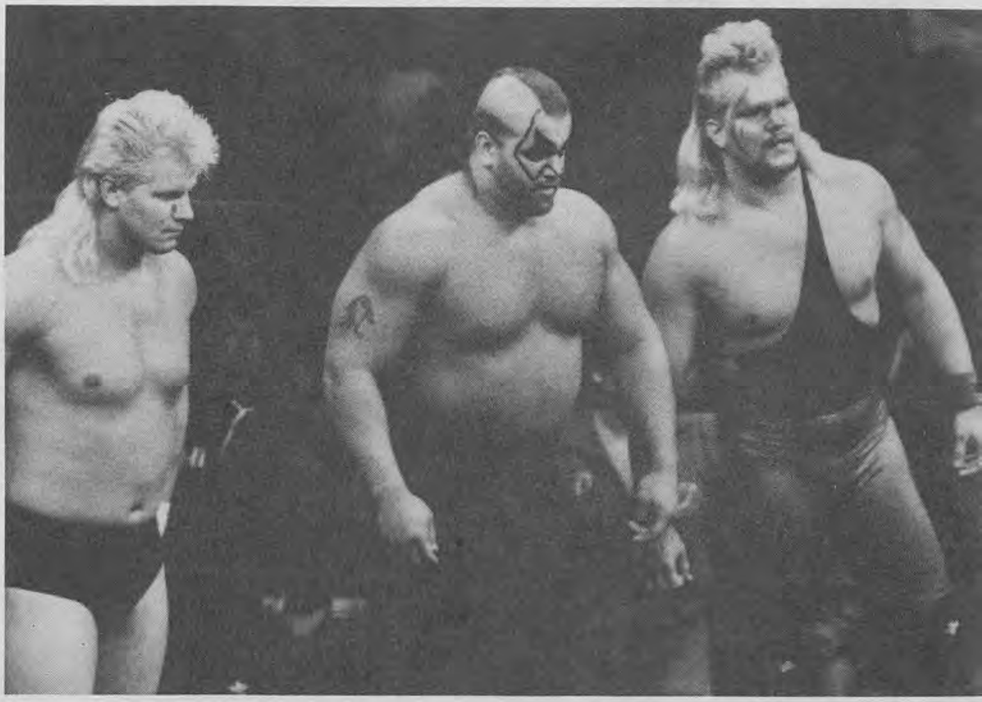
PAUL ELLERING'S WHITE sleeves were rolled up above his elbows. His arms were nearly a blur as he rifled through the stacks of newspapers and business magazines that covered most of his desk.

"It's everywhere, you don't even have to look for it," he said. "Here's a report in *The New York Times* about how the Japanese are years ahead of us in the development of HDTV—high definition television. It's the technology of the future, and it'll be a $25-billion market before you know it." Ellering handed me the newspaper. "Where are we, the U.S., in that race? Nowhere!

"Here's a magazine article about the power of the yen versus the weakness of the dollar." Ellering handed me the magazine. "And here's an analysis of the purchasing power of Japanese corporations as reflected in the U.S. business world's selling of undeveloped real estate, business properties, and corporate entities to Japanese concerns." I leafed through the report, but it might as well have been written in Egyptian hieroglyphs for all I could understand.

"Japan has risen from the ashes of World War II to become *the* major economic force in the world today," Ellering said. I was never very good at history, but I follow current events enough to know that he's absolutely right. And I also know that professional wrestling hasn't been immune

*(Continued on page 54)*

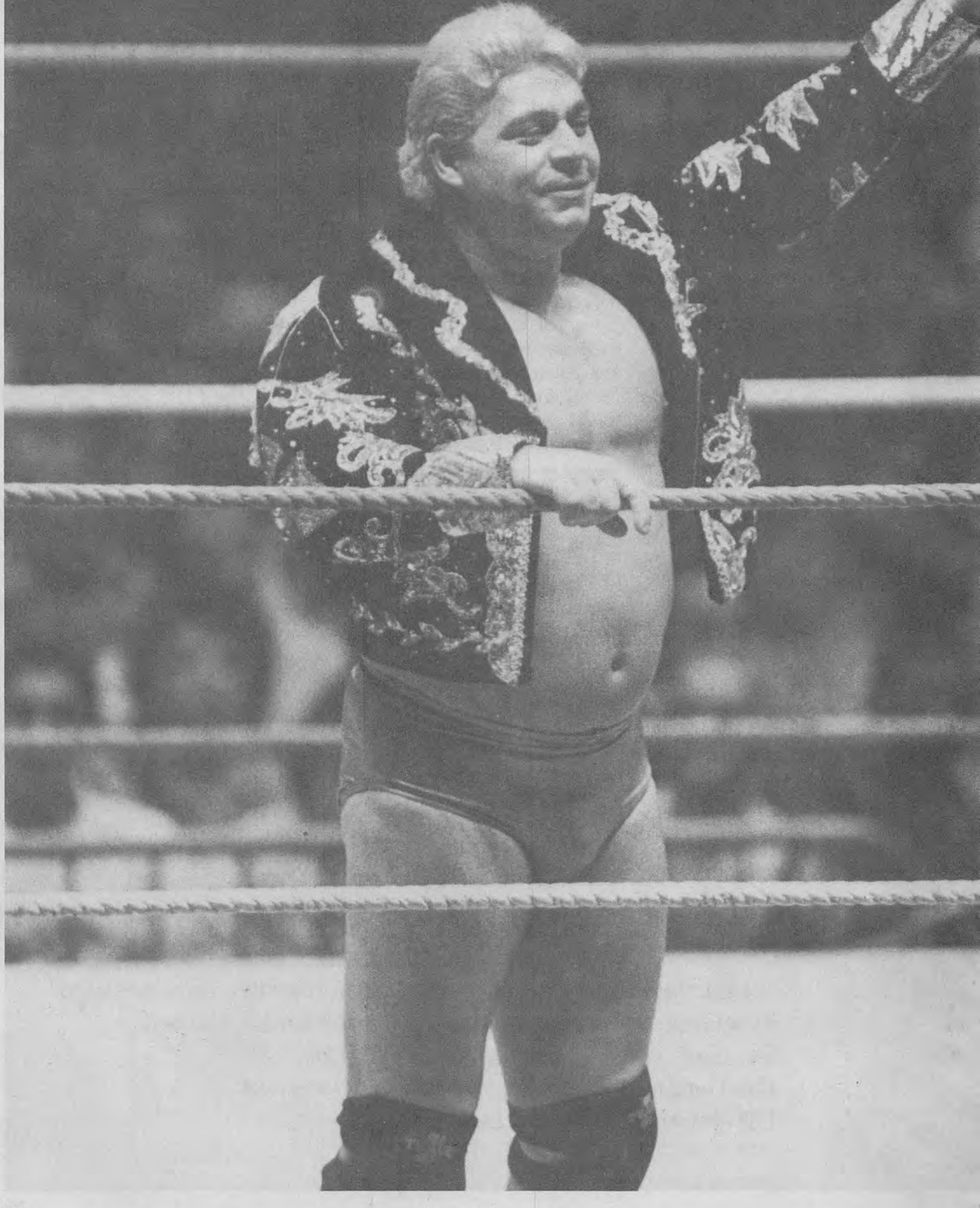


Johnny Ace, Animal, and The Terminator wrestled six-man matches in Japan. The Warriors' manager, Paul Ellering, wanted to keep Hawk and Animal apart for the purpose of scouting different opponents.

**When Hawk and Animal toured Japan recently, they wrestled in several tag team matches—but not with each other! Strangely enough, the temporary split of The Legion of Doom may lead to a new era of U.S.-Japanese relations in wrestling!**

*Photos by Koichi Yoshizawa*

**Despite being the most acclaimed ring competitor of all time, Hulk Hogan is not invulnerable. Just ask Dino Bravo, who may be the one man in wrestling to hold clear dominance over the "Hulkster"!**



# DINO BRAVO: THE MAN HULK HOGAN CANNOT BEAT!

**By Eddie Ellner**

A RECENT POLL in wrestling arenas throughout Canada asked fans to list the most startling events in Canadian wrestling history. What mat cataclysm set the Great White North on its frozen ear?

Was it the Mad Dog Vachon-Edouard Carpentier feud? The 1985 reunion of Ronnie and Jimmy Garvin? The legendary battle between Killer Kowalski and Don Leo Jonathan? The night Kowalski ripped off Yukon Eric's ear?

And what about the activities of Canadian favorite sons in the U.S.? Rick Martel's AWA World title triumph over Jumbo Tsuruta; Ronnie Garvin's stunning NWA World title upset of Ric Flair; Andre the Giant's (whom many Canadians claim as their own) vicious change of tactics.

The event that gathered the most votes, however, did not involve a title change. In fact, no belt was on the line. Neither man had, in fact, sipped championship champagne in more than a year. Yet this was the moment that stood above all others in the minds of Canadian wrestling fans: the bearhug Dino Bravo applied

**Dino Bravo forces Hulk Hogan to his knees. Bravo has been one of the few men strong enough to stand up to the "Hulkster."**

to Hulk Hogan in a Montreal ring in January. It has already assumed the trappings of legend.

*"Mon petit chou* [my little cabbage] snaps Hogan in two," said one fan at ringside for the match. "From where did his big muscles grow so?"

"Perhaps from beneath Frenchy Martin's hat," another rejoined, drawing laughter all around. "Perhaps his arms got so big from the flying he used to do."

The last comment drew loud cries from the section of fans who remembered Dino Bravo not as the self-proclaimed "world's strongest man," but as the gentle acrobat whose daring maneuvers and gentle disposition thrilled Canadian crowds for years.

"I remember him and [Domenic] DeNucci darting in the air like hummingbirds," another fan said. "They made the Japs [Toru Tanaka and Mr. Fuji, whom Bravo and DeNucci defeated for the WWF tag team title in 1978] dizzy and stupid. Now, perhaps Dino doesn't move so good anymore, but our boy is certainly strong as a bull elk."

It was to Hogan's great misfortune that Bravo decided to trade in his lightning-quick reflexes for muscles as round as tree trunks and nearly as sturdy. Hogan's career is a study in battling impossible odds and dangerous foes and emerging victorious.

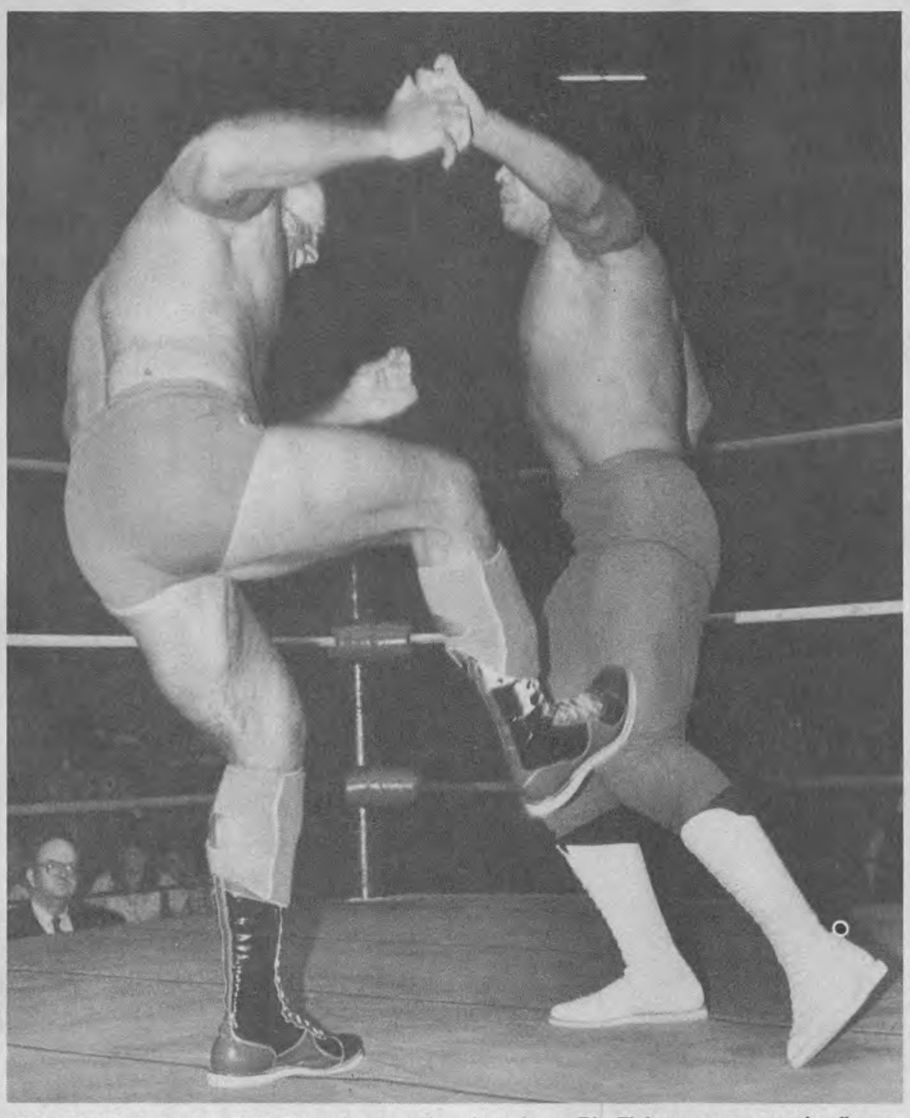
The roster of opponents who have fallen at his feet comprise a veritable "Who's Who" of wres-

*(Continued on page 56)*

# Ric Flair's Chilling Vow

# "I'VE BROKEN STEAMBOAT'S WILL... NOW I'LL *BREAK HIS LEGS!*"

***Ric Flair has sworn revenge on Rick Steamboat, but regaining the NWA World championship won't be enough. The "Nature Boy" has two things in mind: first he wants to break the champion's concentration, then he wants to break his legs!***



NWA World champion Rick Steamboat writhes in pain as Ric Flair squeezes on the figure-four leglock (opposite page). Flair kicks the champion (above). Steamboat executes a vertical suplex on his nemesis (right).

**By Stu Saks**

NOBODY COULD BELIEVE what they were seeing. But they were seeing it nonetheless.

As most fans know, NWA World champion Rick Steamboat operates a successful gym in Charlotte, North Carolina. The employees there were stunned when Steamboat's greatest enemy, former World champion Ric Flair, strolled through the door one recent afternoon. As usual, the "Nature Boy" was dressed in an expensive designer suit.

"I wanna work out," Flair said with a surly grin, handing the cashier a $100 bill. "I'm sure this will cover an afternoon's gym fee, don't you think, son? Keep the change." With that, Flair hoisted his gym bag over his shoulder and walked into the locker room.

The gym attendants were frantic. "Thank God Rick's in Japan," the deskman said to his staff. "I guess we can't refuse to let Flair work out, but don't let him out of your sight for a minute. Who knows what he has in mind?"

Thankfully, the gym attendants had little to worry about. Flair walked in and inspected the gym's selection of Universal and Nautilus weights, but it was clear that he was looking for something else: Steamboat. As he returned to the front counter, he let out a proclamation.

"What a crummy joint this is!" Flair shouted. "I didn't need to come here. I've got a better-equipped gym at home. I just want you people to know that you had better enjoy your jobs at this hole in the wall, because he's gonna have to close it after he gets his hospital bills. I've broken his will, and now I'm gonna break his legs! I'm just sorry he wasn't here to get this warning in person. Tell him I said hello, won't you?"

***

Never before in his 16-year career has Flair been embarrassed like he was

*(Continued on page 60)*

*Photos by Roy London & Floyd See*

# Rhodes & Perez Win Belts!

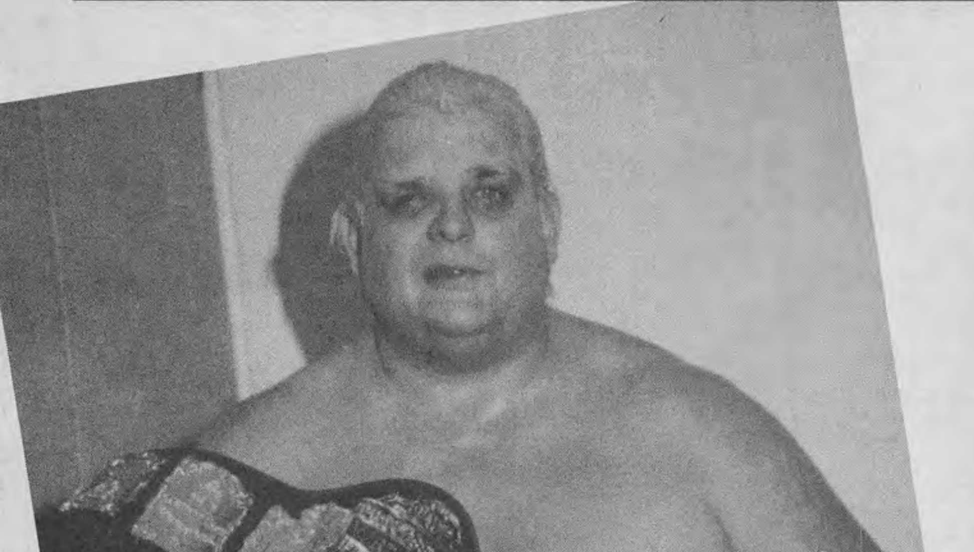
EXCLUSIVE COVERAGE OF

# "THE HOMECOMING"

**By Bob Smith**

IT WAS JUST like old times. There was Dusty Rhodes, bloody and battered, being congratulated by a host of his fellow wrestlers in the locker room. Just a glance at his newly won Professional Wrestling Federation title belt was more than enough to make him forget all about his aching body.

"The 'American Dream' *still* lives!" exclaimed the 20-year veteran. "I'm *still* funky like a monkey! *Still* the man of the hour! And *still* the bull of the woods, and the cock of the walk, if you will! Oh baby, it feels so fine, I'm



In his PWF title victory, Dusty Rhodes pounds U.S. Steel against the turnbuckle (right).

**Florida wrestling is back in a big way, especially after "The Homecoming," a colossal card featuring some of the sport's biggest stars. Dusty Rhodes and Al Perez are now the PWF's two champions, but that's only part of this story**

about to bust my britches, chillun'!"

Make no mistake, Dusty Rhodes is back in a big way—and so is Florida Championship Wrestling. The federation has been in operation for months, but with "The Homecoming," a massive card held March 11 at the Tampa State Fairgrounds, it appears that Florida is primed to regain its status as a wrestling capital.

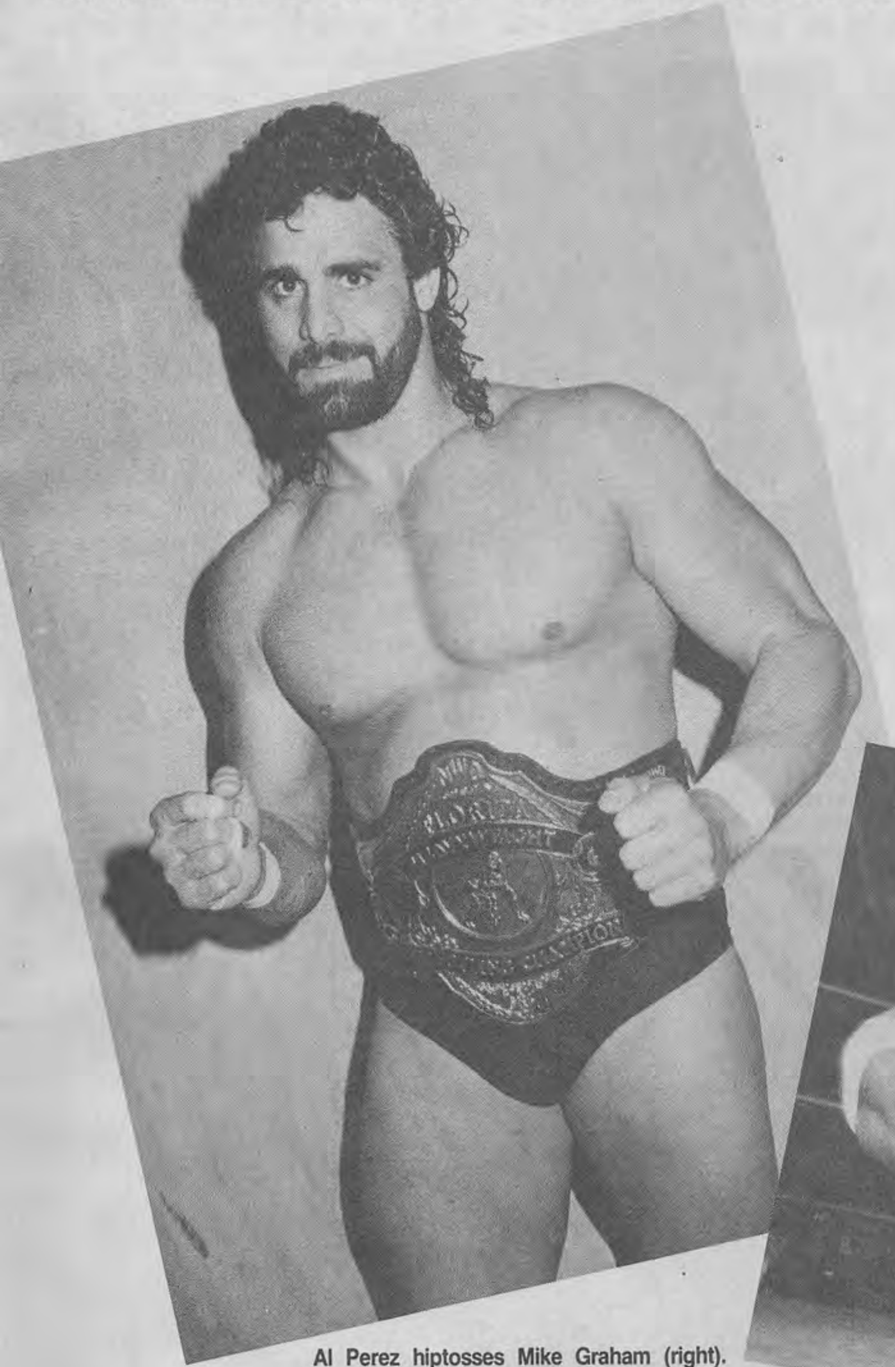
"I don't think there's been a finer wrestling card this year," said Randy Roberts, the president of the newly formed Professional Wrestling Federation, which oversees all FCW matches and titles. "This was the kind of event we needed to put both the FCW and the PWF on the map. Now we're looking to bring our exciting brand of wrestling to fans all over the world. And now we've established our first PWF champion in Dusty, and a new Florida champion in Al Perez."

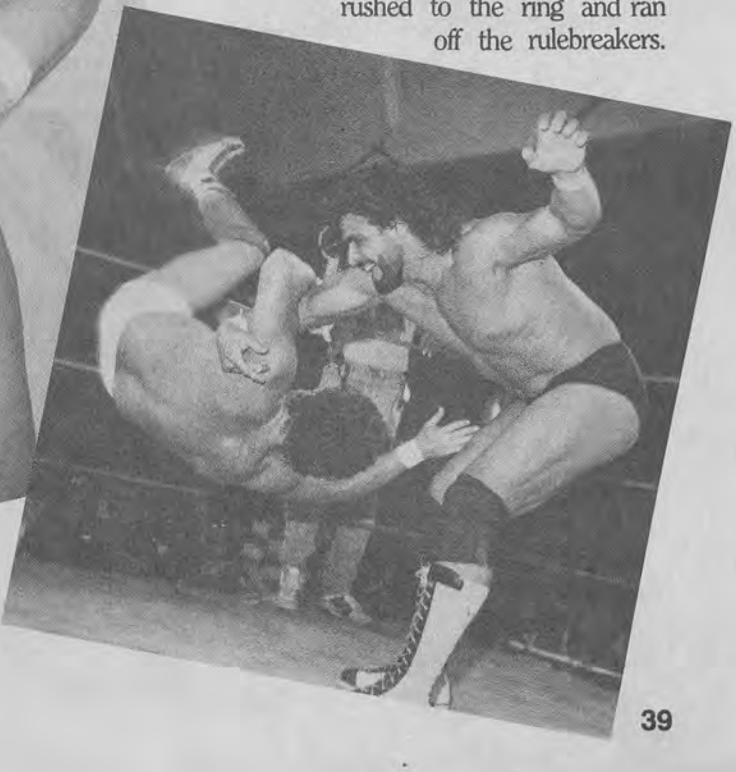
The card was named "The Homecoming" because of Rhodes' return to Florida, but several stars, such as Bam Bam Bigelow, Oliver Humperdink, Bobby Jaggers, Black Bart, and the team of Johnny Ace and The Terminator, had also returned to the Sunshine State in the weeks before the event. It was apparent, however, that the fans had come to see Rhodes against the massive 407-pound U.S. Steel, managed by "Diamond" Dallas Page, in a match to determine the first PWF champion.

"Father time has finally caught up with ol' Dusty," said Page in the hours before the main event. "The big Steelman is gonna beat on that Texas refugee like a red-headed stepchild. I've been training my man for weeks for this match. There's no way this mountain of muscle won't *dominate*, daddy, especially with Humper helpin' me at ringside."

Page's boasts weren't far from the truth. Steel ravaged Rhodes throughout the match, and had the veteran in trouble after delivering three crushing legdrops to Dusty's chest. As Rhodes lay prone in the center of the ring, Steel mounted a cornerpost to prepare himself for a flying splash. As it turned out, Rhodes was playing possum, and used his guile to roll out of the way. He rolled back on top of the unconscious Steel, and three seconds later a new champion was crowned.

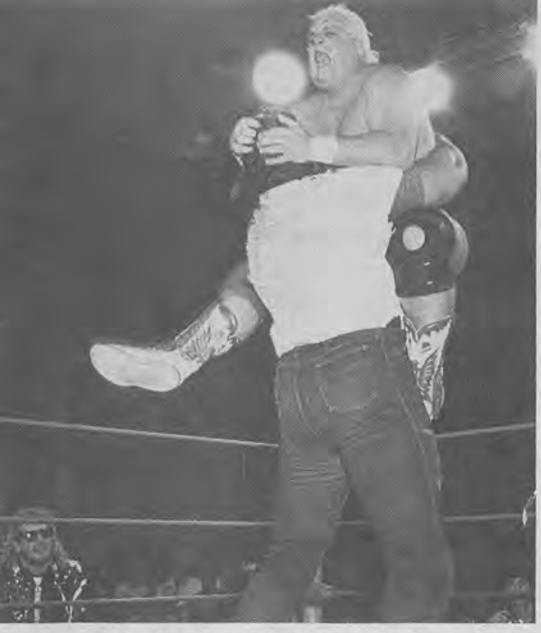
The action didn't end there, however. Bigelow, who recently turned against Rhodes, joined Page and Humperdink in attacking Rhodes. To everyone's surprise, Dick Slater, who had been feuding with Dustin Rhodes, rushed to the ring and ran off the rulebreakers.





**Al Perez hiptosses Mike Graham (right). Perez defeated Graham to win the Florida championship.**

*Photos by Duane Long*



**U.S. Steel, managed by "Diamond" Dallas Page, bearhugs Rhodes (above). The "American Dream" outsmarted his larger opponent to win the title. Perez, a sore *winner,* smashes Graham with a chair (below).**

"I'm only doin' what any real man would do," said Slater, who was double-crossed by Humperdink and Bigelow during a tag team match earlier in the card. "I'm finished hangin' around with losers and creeps. Now, I'm standing behind Dusty. He knows where I am if he ever needs me."

Mike Graham probably could have used Slater's help. Al Perez defeated the second-generation star for the FCW title, and broke his left arm in the process. Perez repeatedly smashed Graham's arms into the cornerposts, and applied a chicken wing to add additional damage. Graham may be out of action for months.

"This is the *new* Al Perez you're seeing," said a jubilant Perez after the match. "I was too much of a nice guy in the NWA. Now, nothing's gonna stop me, particularly an old-timer like Graham. Let this be a warning—Dusty's gonna be the next one to get an arm or leg busted. I'll make him pay for ducking my challenges all through 1988."

The new Florida champion's brother, Lou Perez, was not quite as successful, as FCW junior heavyweight champion Jim Backlund held him to a 20-minute draw. Terry Funk, also looking to make a triumphant Florida return, was disqualified for using a chair against Dustin Rhodes. In a wild eight-man tag match, Jaggers, Bart, Terminator, and Ace defeated The Italian Stallion, Bret Sawyer, and The Nasty Boys after Bart illegally blasted Sawyer with his branding iron. The Commandos, Ray Candy and Grizzly Boone, made their FCW debuts by double-splashing The Star Riders.

The undercard was thrilling, but in the end the talk of the town was the title victories for Rhodes and Perez. The man known as the "Latin Heartthrob" has now challenged Rhodes to a belt vs. belt match—winner take all.

"Rhodes' victory over Steel was a fluke," claimed Perez. "There's no way I'd let Dusty outsmart me that way. I'm young, handsome, and in the best shape of my life. Dusty is old, ugly, and on the critical list at Jack LaLanne. I'm the greatest wrestler in Florida, so he can't duck me forever."

Rhodes has heard these kind of threats often in the past, and it's assumed he'll meet the challenge, but right now he has more important things in mind.

"Bein' the PWF titleholder is one of the greatest things ever to happen to me," said Rhodes. "This even tops bein' NWA World champion, because this time everybody had written me off. Now, my main goal is to let the whole world know about the PWF, and to let 'em know that the Dream is bigger and better than he's ever been, baby!" □

**Dustin Rhodes slams Terry Funk (above). Funk was disqualified for using a chair. Bam Bam Bigelow and Oliver Humperdink turned against Dick Slater during a tag team match (below).**

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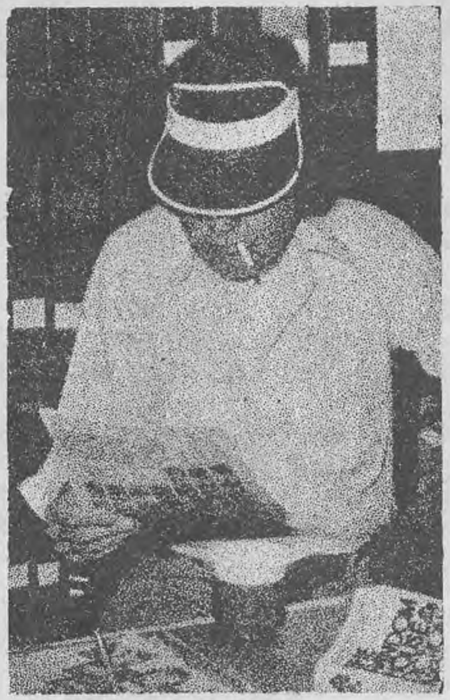
# MATT BROCK'S LOOKING BACK



# PAUL BOESCH: 1912-1989

SADLY, ANOTHER LEGEND has left us. One of the greatest men in our sport, Paul Boesch, died in Houston on March 7. He lived to the age of 76 and, if you were able to ask him, he'd have told you that he lived a rich, full life. He'd tell you that he was happy with what he accomplished, and that it was time for him to go.

I don't agree. As far as I'm concerned, his timing couldn't have been worse. Paul left us much too soon.

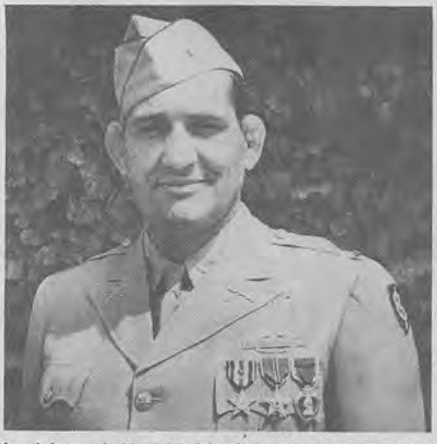
To look over Paul's record is to look at the history of wrestling itself, particularly in the city of Houston. This legendary figure spent more than 40 years as an author, wrestler, and goodwill ambassador for the mat sport. Personally, I'll always remember him as the greatest promoter in history.

Why? Boesch always put the fans first and foremost in his mind when he promoted cards, large or small. Although he was constantly busy, he was always happy to speak with the paying customers. He also had the uncanny ability to deliver top-flight wrestling events, giving the fans the most for their hard-earned dollars. I wish more of today's mega-minded promoters would take his lead.

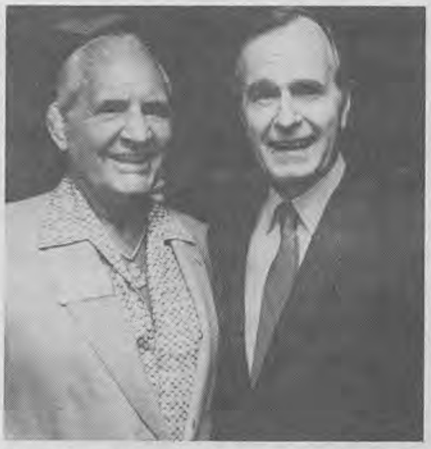
**Paul Boesch puts a chinlock on Jack Dalton. Although he was an outstanding wrestler in his day, Boesch was better known for his work as a promoter and broadcaster in Houston. He died in March at the age of 76.**

Wrestling was much more satisfying when you knew there would be a good show every time out. Do you even know the name of the promoter at your local arena? Do you think he would give a damn about you? In Houston, the wrestlers, fans, and reporters always knew they had a friend in Paul. He was an honest businessman whose love for wrestling was enormous.

But promotion was only one of the many things Paul did during his life. A



**Paul Boesch: as a young wrestler (above left), a highly decorated soldier in the Army during World War II (above center), and as a wrestler against Dalton (above right).**



**Boesch broadcasts with a young admirer (above left). Dozens of his friends honored him at a card in his honor in 1987 (above center). Boesch was a good friend of President George Bush (above right).**

native of the Bronx, New York, Boesch had to curtail his wrestling career because of World War II. Like in everything else he did, he excelled, earning six decorations. When the war ended, Boesch moved to Houston, and the love affair between the man and the city began.

He landed a spot as the host of the *Houston Wrestling* television show, a gig that lasted more than 35 years. As a former pro wrestler, he loved the sport, and helped originate many innovations that today's fans take for granted. Steel cage matches are a staple at many wrestling cards today, but Boesch was the man responsible for the concept. Originally, he called them "fence" matches, and the only reason he did it was to try to keep some kind of control over Bull Curry, a man who terrorized Texas rings 25 years ago.

In 1967, Boesch became the Houston promoter, replacing Morris Sigel. For the next 20 years, a constant parade of stars marched through the Sam Houston Coliseum. Great men, great matches: Wahoo McDaniel, Gino Hernandez, Jose Lothario, Bruiser Brody, Boris Malenko, Johnny Valentine, Ernie Ladd. All of these grapplers—and dozens more—became stars while working under Boesch. And none of them ever had a cross word for their promoter.

And neither have I. One of the proudest moments of my career was when I received a letter written by Paul about my column in the January 1987 issue of this magazine. I don't want to come across as a sentimental old fool, but I have that letter tucked away in a scrapbook. Even though he took serious issue with some of the things I wrote in that column (a look at an NWA title match between Jim Londos and Jim Browning), I was proud just to have gotten his attention.

"Thanks, Matt," wrote Boesch. "At least your story aroused a flood of memories in one old-timer. But then, when you get as old as I am, you will be picky-picky about what youngsters write!"

That statement was typical Boesch, full of self-deprecating humor, but also full of warmth and honesty. It was a trait that the city of Houston loved, and they showed their affection at his retirement card at Sam Houston Coliseum on August 28, 1987. Although it was a WWF event, promoters and wrestlers from all over the world came out to wish Boesch a happy retirement.

There they stood, the greats of the game. Men like Pat Patterson, Verne Gagne, Jack Tunney, Stu Hart, and Lou Thesz. They all worked for other organizations, but they all forgot about their professional differences on that night; they only wanted to honor Boesch. I was there, too. I was invited to make an in-ring appearance, but I politely declined. Instead, I sat in the last row of the upper balcony.

After all, if anyone saw the tears in my eyes, it would've ruined my image. □

(Continued from page 7)

won? Vicious should instead look to legends like Harley Race, Bruno Sammartino, or Jack Brisco. Those men know what it is to be a champion, and they've got more experience than all those other guys combined.

I say we shouldn't put too much pressure on Vicious to succeed. Give the guy a couple of years before we start making brash predictions. Remember, even the greatest athletes can fail if they aren't nurtured properly.

AL HAAS
Marietta, GA

## RICHTER'S RISE

Finally, an interview with the best female wrestler in the world, Wendi Richter ("Q & A," May 1989)! It's about time you started giving Wendi the credit she deserves as one of the finest competitors of *either* gender.

One thing that bothers me, though, is the fact that everbody keeps throwing names like Brandy Mae and Madusa Miceli in Wendi's face all the time. Those women look and wrestle like a couple of misplaced centerfold models. Get serious! The only female wrestlers who take the sport as seriously as Wendi does are Fabulous Moolah, Sherri Martel, Magnificent Mimi, and Judy Martin. I'd like to see Wendi defend her AWA World title against any of those women, not the inferior competitors she sees in her home federation.

C'mon, AWA, get with it! Wendi's a great champion! But unless you get her some better competition, she'll be just like boxing's Mike Tyson—unbeatable, but only because she's never been truly tested.

HEATHER O'CONNELL
Minneapolis

**AWA World women's champion Wendi Richter has Susan Sexton caught in a surfboard variation. Richter is an excellent champion, writes Heather O'Connell, but she deserves to face top competition more often.**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## GORGEOUS GEORGE

Wrestling is a great sport with many superstars, but it also contains many men and women who do not receive the praise and recognition they deserve. A perfect example is Mike George.

This man is a wily veteran—he's been in the sport for nearly 20 years—but he's never had a world championship to show for it. During the early part of this decade, he gave former NWA champions Ric Flair and Harley Race many tough battles. Today, George defends his WWA title against top contenders, and also competes in areas like World Class and the AWA.

Recently, George was involved in the battle royal to crown a new AWA World champion. He made a pretty good showing of himself, and who knows? Maybe Mike will be the one to upset Larry Zbyszko for the title!

Mike George may be older and slower, but whether you like him or not you have to admit: He's a real credit to the sport.

DWAYNE SOPER
Medicine Hat, Alberta

## SWAT THE SWATS

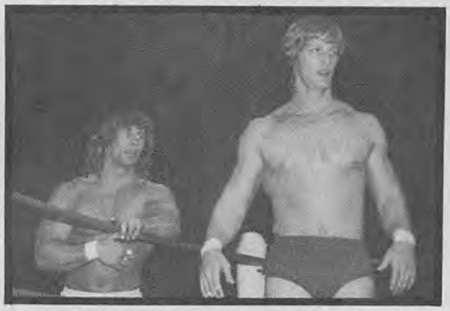
It's terrifying what The Samoan Swat Team is doing in the NWA right now, and the article in your May 1989 issue really brought that to light

*(Continued on page 46)*

# THIS MONTH IN...

## Inside Wrestling

**MEGAPOWERS II**? Yes, the time has come for **STING** and **THE ULTIMATE WARRIOR** to reunite!



**KERRY VON ERICH** makes a shocking confession: "I can't count on my brother anymore"

**PLUS . . .**

An exclusive "Hotseat" interview with **BARRY WINDHAM** . . . **RIC FLAIR** and **RICK STEAMBOAT** square off "One on One" . . . Is **JIMMY HART** secretly managing **RANDY SAVAGE**? . . . **DEMOLITION** vs. **POWERS OF PAIN**: World champions of violence! . . . Ex-NWA stars **NIKITA KOLOFF**, **BUDDY LANDELL**, **JIM GARVIN**, **THE FANTASTICS**, and **RICK MORTON** highlight an exciting card!

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in the July 1989 issue of
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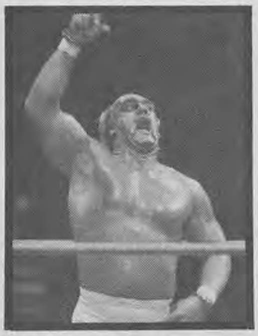
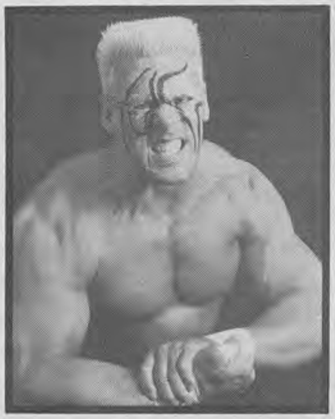
## Sports Review Wrestling



**HULK HOGAN** takes on **RANDY SAVAGE**—and that's just the beginning in our COMPLETE match-by-match coverage of **WRESTLEMANIA V**!



An exciting and creative special contest from **STING**: "Go ahead—paint my face!"

**PLUS . . .**

Exclusive coverage: **RICK STEAMBOAT** defends his NWA World title in Japan . . . **RICK MARTEL** vs. **RICK RUDE:** Sex symbol showdown . . . An interview with **ERIC EMBRY** . . . Bill Apter's "Locker Room Confidential" and Eddie Ellner's "Straight Talk"

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## THE EXCITEMENT LIVES ON! THE SUPERSTARS OF A SUPER SUMMER!

The December 1988 edition of *The Wrestler* was a collectors' dream! It included a dynamic eight-page FULL-COLOR section featuring "The Superstars Of A Super Summer" competing in some of 1988's greatest cards and matches! Included in this exciting full-color section: Hulk Hogan, Sting, Randy Savage, Lex Luger, Rick Rude, The Ultimate Warrior, Jerry Lawler, Ric Flair, Hacksaw Duggan, The Fantastics, Dusty Rhodes, Ted DiBiase, Barry Windham, The Honky Tonk Man, and Nikita Koloff! Also included in this magnificent special issue is a full analysis of the summer's top action, plus all the regular *Wrestler* stories and features. This issue was a newsstand sellout, but we have a limited number of back issues available for the collectors' bargain price of only $5.00 each. Don't be disappointed—order yours today!

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# YOUR LETTERS

*(Continued from page 44)*

**Samu of The Samoan Swat Team chinlocks Michael Hayes. Reader Ed Menning predicts that Hayes, a rulebreaker again, will team with the SST.**

("Swat Team Hunts Down Hayes: It's Time For The Freebirds To Reunite!"). But now that Michael Hayes has changed his ways and become a rulebreaker again, I have an even more frightening prediction—I think Hayes will soon team up with the SST!

Fatu and Samu are the best Samoan wrestlers since Afa and Sika. And since they've taken on Paul E. Dangerously as their manager, they've never been more devastating. Imagine the carnage possible if Hayes gets involved with them! I once trusted Hayes, but by attacking Lex Luger, Hayes has proven that he's truly evil after all. If he decided to tag with Samu and Fatu, they'd be unstoppable. Even the NWA six-man tag team champions, The Road Warriors and Genichiro Tenryu, wouldn't be able to stand up to them.

It's time for a contending team to get rid of the SST once and for all. Currently, Jim Cornette's Midnight Express is battling them, and I hope they can beat them. If they can't, it could be dark days in the NWA for a long time to come.

ED MENNING
Atlanta

### DUSTY'S DREAM

I know there are a lot of sad fans across the country right now since Dusty Rhodes left the NWA. As a native Floridian I'm ecstatic! But when I found out in your May 1989 issue the *real* reasons why Dusty left ("Why Dusty Rhodes Left The NWA"), I realized what an agonizing decision it must have been for him.

But soon I snapped out of it, and I realized what excitement this superstar has brought to the FCW. He's the new PWF champion, and all the fans here are ecstatic. The NWA's loss is Florida's gain!

JULIE KANE
Tampa, FL □

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**August 1982**/COLOR PINUP: Dino Bravo. **Steamboat & Rich**, Andre, Martel, Piper, Blassie.

**January 1983**/COLOR PINUP: Ken Patera. **Rick Steamboat**, Rich, Brody, Sullivan, Backlund.

**February 1983**/COLOR PINUP: Ivan Putski. **Rhodes vs. Garvin**, Snuka, Super Destroyer, Bockwinkel, Funk.

**April 1983**/COLOR PINUP: Superstar Graham. **Mil Mascaras**, Valentine, Orndorff, Hart.

**June 1983**/COLOR PINUP: Cowboy Bob Orton. **Rick Martel**, Von Erich, Slaughter, Muraco.

**July 1983**/COLOR PINUP: Ivan Koloff. **Tommy Rich**, Patera, Von Erich, Snuka.

**August 1983**/COLOR PINUP: Larry Zbyszko. **Roddy Piper**, Sullivan, Zbyszko, Von Erich, Wrestling II.

**October 1983**/COLOR PINUP: Junkyard Dog. **Tommy Rich**, Johnson, Adonis, Rhodes, Piper.

**November 1983**/COLOR PINUP: Roddy Piper. **Harley Race**, Santana, Mascaras, Ellering, Valiant, Race.

**December 1983**/COLOR PINUP: Wahoo McDaniel. **Dusty Rhodes**, Hayes, Steamboat, Hansen, DiBiase.

**January 1984**/COLOR PINUP: Harley Race. **Rick Martel**, Snuka, Freebirds, Dillon, Sawyer.

**February 1984**/COLOR PINUP: Jim Garvin & Sunshine. **Greg Valentine**, Super Destroyer, Race, Sawyer, Abdullah.

**June 1984**/COLOR PINUP: Dick Slater. **Ted DiBiase**, Wrestling II, Magnum T.A., Patera, Hogan.

**July 1984**/COLOR PINUP: Paul Ellering. **Jimmy Valiant**, JYD, Fab Ones, Gagne, Windham.

**August 1984**/COLOR PINUP: Stan Hansen. **Jerry Lawler**, Sullivan, Slaughter, Blackwell & Patera, Flair.

**October 1984**/COLOR PINUP: Billy Jack. **Kerry Von Erich**, Martel, Blanchard, Fabulous Blonds, Armstrong.

**November 1984**/COLOR PINUP: Rick Martel. **Sgt. Slaughter**, Von Erich, Road Warriors, Windham, Rotundo.

**January 1985**/COLOR PINUP: Tito Santana. **Road Warriors**, Billy Jack, Hayes, 1984 fan ballot.

**February 1985**/COLOR PINUP: Magnum T.A. **Rick Martel**, Hogan, Backlund, Ellering.

**April 1985**/COLOR PINUP: Ronnie Garvin, **Jimmy Snuka**, Warriors, Gordy, Flair, Rhodes.

**June 1985**/COLOR PINUP: Barry Windham. **Dusty Rhodes**, Slaughter, Hogan, Von Erich, T.A.

**July 1985**/COLOR PINUP: Sgt. Slaughter. **Hogan vs. Piper**, Warriors, One Man Gang, T.A., Martel.

**September 1985**/COLOR PINUP: Junkyard Dog. **Magnum T.A**, Von Erich, Hogan, AWA scouting reports.

**October 1985**/COLOR PINUP: Chris Adams. **Rick Steamboat**, Warriors, Nikita, WWF scouting reports.

**November 1985**/COLOR PINUP: Randy Savage. **Ric Flair**, Slaughter, Steamboat, World Class scouting reports.

**December 1985**/COLOR PINUP: Jesse Ventura. **Great American Bash**, Von Erich, Orndorff, Williams & DiBiase.

**January 1986**/COLOR PINUP: Hacksaw Duggan. **Hulk Hogan**, T.A., Brody.

**February 1986**/COLOR PINUP: Nikita Koloff. **Mike Von Erich**, Warriors, Santana, Taylor, Barbarian, Race.

**April 1986**/COLOR PINUP: Ric Flair. **Wendi Richter**, Adams & Hernandez, Dusty & Warriors vs. Flair & Andersons.

**May 1986**/COLOR PINUP: Rick Steamboat. **Road Warriors**, Humongous, Bulldogs, Hansen vs. Martel.

**June 1986**/COLOR PINUP: Kevin Von Erich. **Hulk Hogan**, Adams, Duggan, Scott Hall.

**July 1986**/COLOR PINUP: King Kong Bundy. **R & R Express**, Hall and Hennig, Ventura, Warriors.

**August 1986**/COLOR PINUP: Dusty Rhodes. **Randy Savage**, Lugar vs. Race, Blanchard vs. Flair, Rude.

**October 1986**/COLOR PINUP: John Studd. **Nikita Koloff**, Savage vs. Bundy, Landell, Flair vs. Lugar, Simpson.

**November 1986**/COLOR PINUP: Baby Doll. **British Bulldogs**, Von Erich, Hansen, Gordy, Flair-Tully-Arn-Ole.

**December 1986**/COLOR PINUP: Great American Bash. **Great American Bash**, Midnight Rockers, Von Erich, Windham.

**January 1987**/COLOR PINUP: Fabulous Freebirds. **Roddy Piper**, Nikita vs. T.A., Snuka, Simpson.

**February 1987**/COLOR PINUP: Savage & Elizabeth. **UWF Tournament**, T.A., Baby Doll, Hogan vs. Orndorff.

**April 1987**/COLOR PINUP: Lex Luger. **Dusty & Nikita**, DiBiase, DeBeers, Dingo, WWF Housecleaning.

**MAY 1987**

**May 1987**/COLOR PINUP: Steve Williams. **Andre-Hogan**, UWF Tourny, Albano, Cornette, Dynamite Kid, Kerry.

**June 1987**/COLOR PINUP: Hulk Hogan. **Magnum T.A.**, Can-Ams, Warriors, Freebirds, Hall.

**July 1987**/COLOR PINUP: Midnight Rockers. **Steamboat-Savage**, Luger, Duggan, Garvins, Sting.

**August 1987**/COLOR PINUP: Jim Garvin & Precious. **Hogan-Andre**, Warriors, Windham-Flair, Gordy, Bigelow.

**October 1987**/COLOR PINUP: Ted DiBiase. **Ric Flair**, Williams, Rockers, Hogan vs. Steamboat, NWA & WWF.

**November 1987**/COLOR PINUP: George Steele. **Nikita Koloff**, Warriors, Harts, Hogan, Windham.

**January 1988**/COLOR PINUP: The Road Warriors. **Ted DiBiase**, Flair-Garvins, Hogan & Ventura, Zbyszko.

**February 1988**/COLOR PINUP: Ronnie Garvin. **Randy Savage**, Garvin-Flair, Von Erichs, Freebirds.

**April 1988**/COLOR PINUP: Rick Martel. **Lex Luger**, Flair-Garvin, Kerry, Survivor Series, Iron Sheik.

**May 1988**/COLOR PINUP: Sting. **Andre**, Valentine-Beefcake, Flair, Cornette, Owen Hart.

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**July 1988**/COLOR PINUP: Curt Hennig. **Hogan vs. Andre**, Express vs. Rockers, Beefcake, Perez, Rotundo-Sting.

**August 1988**/COLOR PINUP: Al Perez. **Savage & Hogan**, Gilbert-Lawler, Four Horsemen, Kerry Von Erich.

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**February 1989**/COLOR PINUP: Jake Roberts. **Luger**, Hogan-Savage, Kevin Von, Beefcake-Bass.

**April 1989**/COLOR PINUP: Rick Steiner. **Savage**, Dangerously, Muraco, Turner, Powers.

**May 1989**/COLOR PINUP: Missy Hyatt. **Hogan**, Ultimate, Kerry, Luger, Steamboat, 10 stars in limbo.

**June 1989**/COLOR PINUP: Rick Steamboat. **Hogan vs. Savage**, Warriors, Zbyszko, Rhodes.

**July 1989**/COLOR PINUP: Roddy Piper. **Steamboat**, Hogan, Paul E., Dream Tournament, Studd, Muraco.

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(Continued from page 8)

belts on March 5 in Augusta, Maine. Savoldi has now turned his attention to ICW champ **Tony Atlas**, while Steamboat is teaming with Muraco as **The Happy Hawaiians** . . . Frustrated by his inability to beat Continental champ **Tom Prichard**, **Moondog Spot** has left the CWF.

Don't be surprised if **Stan Lane** and **Bobby Eaton** turn up in the WWF to resume their feud with

Stan Lane of The Midnight Express crunches Arn Anderson on the ropes. The Express, who take credit for driving Anderson and Tully Blanchard out of the NWA, have also left the federation.

**Tully Blanchard** and **Arn Anderson**. That appears to be the most likely landing point for Lane, Eaton, and manager **Jim Cornette** now that they've decided to leave the NWA. Lane and Eaton won their first and only NWA World title from Anderson and Blanchard back on September 10, and shortly afterward Tully and Arn came to the WWF.

Lane, Eaton, and Cornette quit the NWA in late March after failing to come to an agreement on a new contract with federation officials. The old contract was scheduled to expire on April 15 and Cornette claimed that negotiations to renew did not meet their demands in terms of money and future matches.

The Midnights were expected to finish off their remaining obligations before leaving. Then Lane planned to "hang out on the beach" while Eaton allows several injuries he's accumulated to heal. But Cornette said his team would wrestle on the independent circuit and then hold a press conference to announce what major federation they decided to sign with.

"Anything's a possibility at this point and we'd just love to get our hands on Tully and Arn," Cornette said. "Besides, **Bobby Heenan** is an obnoxious little sucker and I wouldn't mind teaching him, too, who's the best manager in wrestling. Right now, I just can't get Paul E. Dangerously off my mind."

**Eric Embry**, who lost a loser-leave-town match to **Gary Young** back in February, has been reinstated by World Class, thanks to a petition drive by **Percy Pringle**. Pringle started the campaign back in mid-February and begged fans to send in letters to bring back Embry. Matchmaker **Frank Dusek** met with Pringle and the WCCW Board of Directors on March 25 and they decided to bow to the fans' pressure. Embry has another loser-leave-town match with Young coming up and you can bet there *won't* be a second chance this time.

Chalk up another major signing for the new PWF. **Manny Fernandez** has invaded the area and is after **Dusty Rhodes**' PWF heavyweight championship. The PWF has become a haven for former NWA stars . . . Meanwhile, there's been plenty of action in the FCW, which is run under the PWF umbrella. **The Nasty Boys** won the belts from **Johnny Ace** and **The**

The Botswana Beast digs his fingers into Eric Embry's neck. Thanks in part to Percy Pringle, Embry was reinstated in World Class one month after losing a loser-leave-town match to Gary Young.

**Terminator** in a cage match on March 24 in St. Petersburg, Florida, but lost the belts to **Black Bart** and **Bobby Jaggers** on March 28 in Tampa . . . **Roddy Piper** has offered any Pacific Northwest fan $500 if he can produce a sharp, new photo of **The Grappler** without his mask on. But there's another stipulation: The photo must be taken *away* from the arena.

Former WWF World champion **Bob Backlund** wants another shot at **The Iron Sheik**, who beat him for the WWF title on December 26, 1983, at Madison Square Garden. Negotiations between the two have gone on and off for the past few years and now Backlund is speaking with the NWA about arranging the match. "This issue isn't dead," Backlund told us. "I've proven in Japan that I still can wrestle, and as far as I'm concerned, I never lost the WWF title."

That's what's happening. See you at the matches. □

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**July 1982**/Stories include: Hogan, Rhodes, Steamboat, Adonis.
**August 1982**/Stories include: Andre, Bockwinkel, Steamboat, Backlund.
**September 1982**/Stories include: Atlas, Piper, Lawler, Brody.
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**April 1983**/Stories include: Snuka, Patera, Kabuki, Rich.
**May 1983**/Stories include: Rich, Snuka, Sullivan, Steamboat.
**June 1983**/Stories include: Studd, Garvin, Rogers, Orton.
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**September 1983**/Stories include: Zbyszko, Piper, Andre, Hayes.
**October 1983**/Stories include: Wrestling II, Backlund, Junkyard Dog, Rhodes.
**November 1983**/Stories include: Hogan, Reed, Von Erich, Dillon.
**December 1983**/Stories include: Von Erich, Samoans, Valiant, Road Warriors.
**March 1984**/Stories include: Junkyard Dog, Rich, Rhodes, Garvin.
**April 1984**/Stories include: Flair, Steamboat, Superstar, Windham.
**May 1984**/Stories include: Iron Sheik, Steamboat, Rotundo, Von Erich.
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**January 1986**/Stories include: Steamboat, Mike Von Erich, Warriors.
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**March 1986**/Stories include: Windham & Rotundo, Warriors-Russians, Rude.
**April 1986**/Stories include: Scott Hall, Rhodes, Flair, Andre, Bill Watts
**May 1986**/Stories include: Randy Savage, Stan Hansen, Rock 'n' Rolls.
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**July 1986**/All-American Special Issue. Stories include: Hogan, Slaughter, T.A.
**August 1986**/Stories include: WrestleMania 2, Garvins, Martel, Fab Ones.
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**March 1989**/Stories include: Hennig, Midnights-Midnights, Fuller & Golden, Ultimate.
**May 1989**/Stories include: Hogan, Steiner, Morton, Bad Co., Taylor.
**June 1989**/Stories include: Hogan-Savage, Luger, Steamboat-Flair.

## INSIDE WRESTLING

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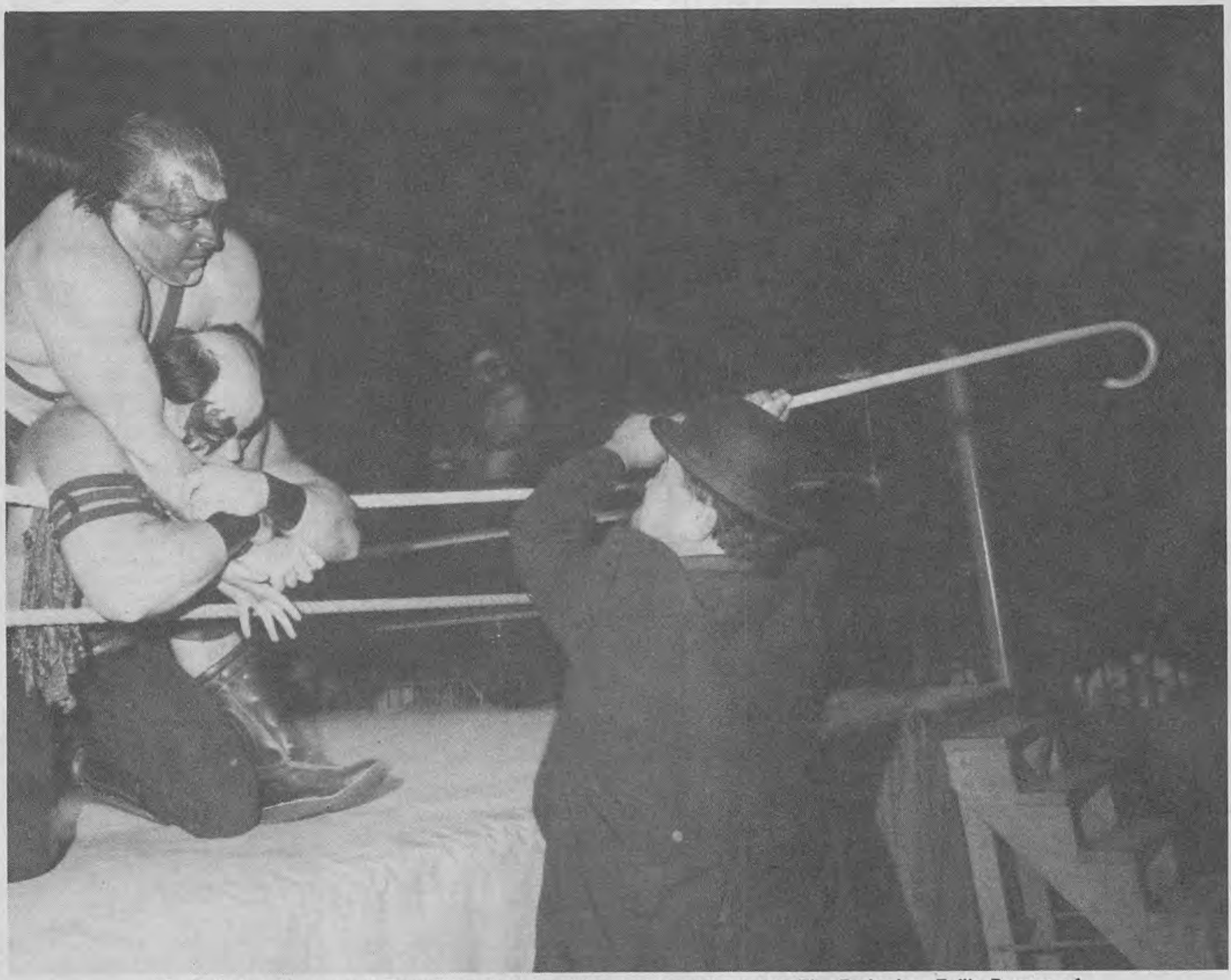
# MEMO TO WWF WRESTLERS

(Continued from page 31)



Mr. Fuji aims his cane at Demolition Ax's head in an attempt to rescue The Barbarian. Fuji's Powers of Pain have had dozens of shots at Demolition's WWF World tag team title, but have yet to win it.

Perhaps Hennig has the right idea. Why should a wrestler hire a manager if that manager can't ensure at least a modicum of success?

In fact, the WWF's crop of managers could be considered monumental busts. A look at their records proves it:

***Bobby Heenan:*** He once managed AWA World champion Nick Bockwinkel, but since coming to the WWF in 1984 he's been an unprecedented flop. He's managed talent like Harley Race, John Studd, Andre the Giant, King Kong Bundy, Tully Blanchard and Arn Anderson, The Islanders, Rick Rude, and several others, but he's never been able to manage any of his men to titles—not even the tag team or Intercontinental belts. The man known as "The Brain" seems to care more about providing color commentary on WWF TV shows, and many wrestlers have refused to sign with him because of it. Reportedly, Hennig was one of them.

***Mr. Fuji:*** This veteran Japanese star had managed Demolition to the WWF World tag team title at WrestleMania IV, but turned against his champions at last year's Survivor Series in order to become the new manager of The Powers of Pain. Fuji apparently thought the Powers were a superior team. But after months without him, Demolition still has a firm hold on the belts. This is a tactical genius at work?

***Frenchy Martin:*** The only man Martin currently manages is Dino Bravo, but he hasn't been able to push Bravo into the federation's top five. Bravo has been very impressive—he nearly crippled Hulk Hogan during a recent bout—but the Canadian veteran seems lost wrestling in six-man tag team bouts and meaningless singles matches. Martin also managed Jos LeDuc for a short time last year, but that association ended almost before it started. Perhaps LeDuc knows something Bravo doesn't.

***Slick:*** He's entertaining to watch, but he, too, has never managed

any champions. He was the man who led Butch Reed into a feud with Don Muraco that sent Reed running from the WWF. He's the man responsible for turning One Man Gang into Akeem, but the 468-pound Chicago native isn't any closer to being a main-event star now than he was before. In recent months, Slick has paired Akeem with the brutal Big Bossman. If his past record is any indication, Slick won't be able to make this 816-pound team any more successful than The Bolsheviks, the Russian team he rushed right into preliminary matches.

***Jimmy Hart:*** It wasn't too long ago when Hart took the WWF by storm. He managed The Hart Foundation to the WWF World tag team title, and pulled off the upset of the century when The Honky Tonk Man captured the Intercontinental title from Rick Steamboat. Hart controlled two of the federation's top three championships—but that was back in 1987. Today, Hart manages Jacques and Raymond Rougeau, The Honky Tonk Man, and an aging Greg Valentine. None of these wrestlers seem primed to make a run at any titles.

The biggest problem with most managers is that they take anywhere from five to 25 percent of their wrestlers' incomes. If men like Slick or Frenchy Martin can't ensure success for their proteges, they could be bankrupting their wrestlers, both professionally and financially.

"It's really a question of maturity," said Don Muraco, who was managed by Mr. Fuji before departing the WWF. "Sometimes, a young wrestler thinks he needs more guidance than he really does. As far as I'm concerned, all the WWF managers aren't worth a damn. Look at my situation. I won the Stampede North American title *without* a manager. Who needs 'em?"

Certainly not Hennig, Brown, or DiBiase. It's starting to look like the era of the manager—at least in the WWF—may be coming to a close. □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# WIN, LOSE, OR DRAW

*(Continued from page 10)*

and I were tag partners back in the WWF, we thought that being nice guys was the way to go. Well, that attitude is only going to get you so far, and in this sport it won't win you any belts."

Spivey concurs.

"You know, we go into these arenas and these fans come up to me and say, 'What happened to you, Spivey? You used to be such a nice man. I used to like you.' I have to laugh in their faces. They don't understand. They never will. If I want to succeed, there can't be anything more important than winning. Kevin Sullivan is a winner. So are Mike and 'Dr. Death.' That's why I'm with the Club. That's the only reason I need."

Spivey may be pleased with himself, but wrestlers who knew him early in his career are saddened by what he has become. "Man, oh, man, that Spivey sure has changed," said Junkyard Dog, who remembers him from the WWF. "He used to be a good, respectful boy, always said hello and thank you and please. Now he's vicious, mean, and nasty, and it's Sullivan's fault. I don't trust that Sullivan, no way."

"You're talking about a guy who could have been a world champion," said NWA World champion Rick Steamboat. "He *still* could become a champion, but he's not going anywhere until he dumps Sullivan and that sick bunch. Danny is a talented young man, but he's using those talents the wrong way. Someday he'll re-

**Ron Simmons howls in pain from the impact of a Spivey backbreaker. Spivey was never so sadistic a wrestler—until Sullivan got hold of him.**

**Spivey and Mike Rotundo double-team Moondog Rex during their WWF stint as The U.S. Express. Years later, their partnership continues in The Varsity Club.**

alize that, but until then it's going to be a long, tough road."

"Let me tell you a story about how Spivey has changed," said Don Muraco. "One night back in '87, me, Danny, and a couple of other guys had some time to kill before our matches started, so we stood at the back of the arena and watched a prelim match. It was nothing special, just two green kids. At the end of the match, one of the kids grabbed the other kid by the hair and banged his head into the ringpost really hard. Well, you shoulda heard Spivey curse up a blue streak. He was offended that the one kid took advantage of his opponent like that.

"About two months ago," Muraco continued, "One of the guys who was watching with us that night was with Spivey again when something similar happened, but all Spivey did was laugh. He said the kid could use some Varsity Club training. Our friend reminded Spivey what he said two years ago, and he said, 'That wasn't me. That was somebody else. That was a bad memory from the past.' *That's* how Dan Spivey has changed. Forget about what he looks like or how he wrestles." □


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# THE ROAD WARRIORS

(Continued from page 33)

from this world economic trend. I mentioned Hiro Matsuda to Ellering.

"Matsuda and the Yamasaki Corporation are just the tip of the iceberg," Ellering said, revealing a bit of managerial jealousy. "His purchase of the contracts of Ric Flair, Barry Windham, Kendall Windham, and Butch Reed was a sweeping move, and it changed the face of the NWA, at least in a business/management sense. Well, more changes are ahead, believe me. Watch this."

Ellering spun around in his swivel chair and inserted a videocassette into the machine on the shelf to the left of his desk. Another press of a button and a television monitor came to life. On the screen I saw Road Warrior Hawk battling Isao Takagi in a tag team match held in Fuji, Japan; Takagi's partner was Shunji Takano, and Hawk's partner, of course, was ...

Genichiro Tenryu?

The Warriors' reluctance to split up for a tag team bout for *any* reason is legendary. Each would sooner pass up a six-figure match purse than enter the ring without the other to back him up—particularly 6,000 miles from home!

So where was Animal?

Ellering pressed the fast forward button on the machine. Seconds later, I saw Animal wrestling on the same Fuji card, teaming with Terminator and Johnny Ace against Jumbo Tsuruta, Kabuki, and Yoshiaki Yatsu.

"Any serious fan or professional knows the skills of men like Yatsu, Kabuki, Takano, Takagi, and Tsuruta," Ellering said. "But how often have you seen these men wrestling in the United States?"

Ellering's question implicitly answered itself. The fact that the Warriors had chosen Tenryu several months ago as the third bearer of their NWA six-man title came as a major surprise. That was true in part because Tenryu is an unknown quantity in the U.S., but also because the gap between the U.S. and Japan, in terms of seeing top Japanese stars tour the States, has traditionally been a wide one.

It's a gap Ellering hopes to bridge.

"Call it a sparring session," Ellering said, "or an audition, if you will. Yes, an audition. A test of stamina and strength against the most awesome competitors the world has seen, the NWA World tag team champions, The Road Warriors."

Ellering chuckled, and I asked him why he saw it necessary to split up The Legion of Doom rather than simply have them wrestle together against a variety of opponents.

"Please, Craig, that's the most elementary of strategic considerations," he replied with a smile. "Imagine, for a moment, that you are Yoshiaki Yatsu, and you are facing Hawk and Animal. Of course you are going to stick to a conservative game plan. You are going to be very, very careful.

"Now imagine you are facing one-half of the Warriors. Something new enters your mind, some new strategies. You are more willing to take chances, to alter those strategies. You will wrestle more on instinct, your true wrestling self will come to the forefront. And *that's* what I wanted to see in the Warriors' opponents on this tour, their true wrestling selves."

I questioned Ellering about the motives for his strategic experiment, and he was peculiarly evasive about revealing too many details.

"I will tell you this," Ellering said. "Matsuda is not the only rich man in

**Hawk shoulderblocks Isao Takagi (above). Animal positions Jumbo Tsuruta for a bearhug (right). Hawk and Tenryu double-team Takagi (far right). Ellering is seriously thinking of signing these Japanese to wrestle in the United States.**

Animal holds Tsuruta for a kick from The Terminator (above). Hawk boots Shunji Takano in the face (below). The Warriors again did well against Japanese competition.

wrestling, and the Japanese are not the only ones in this sport with the money to make things happen. Finances in this world flow in two directions, but lately it's been all too much in *one* direction: Japan buying up what the U.S. has. Well, it's time that financial flow was reversed. It's time for the U.S. to start giving Japan a taste of their own medicine and start buying out *them* for a change."

I asked Ellering if this meant that he's getting ready to purchase the contracts of top Japanese stars, just as Matsuda bought out Flair, the Windhams, and Reed.

His answer?

A smile that would have made Donald Trump envious. □


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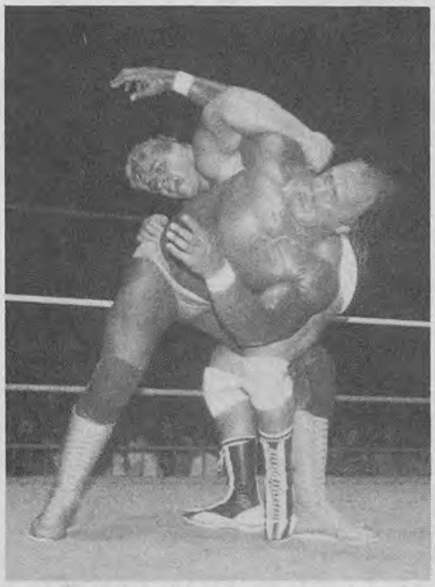
# BRAVO VS. HOGAN

*(Continued from page 35)*



**Bravo catches Hogan in an abdominal stretch. Hogan did not expect to be tested so severely by the Canadian.**

**The "Hulkster" desperately tries to escape Bravo's grasp. In one notable match, Hogan was carried from the ring on a stretcher, courtesy of a Bravo bearhug!**

tling's rulebreaking greats. Paul Orndorff, King Kong Bundy, Bad News Brown, Randy Savage, Roddy Piper, Big Bossman, Andre the Giant, Ted DiBiase . . . the list gets longer each day. But Dino Bravo's name is not yet on it. Though the rivals have battled each other several times, Bravo continues to emerge unscathed and victorious.

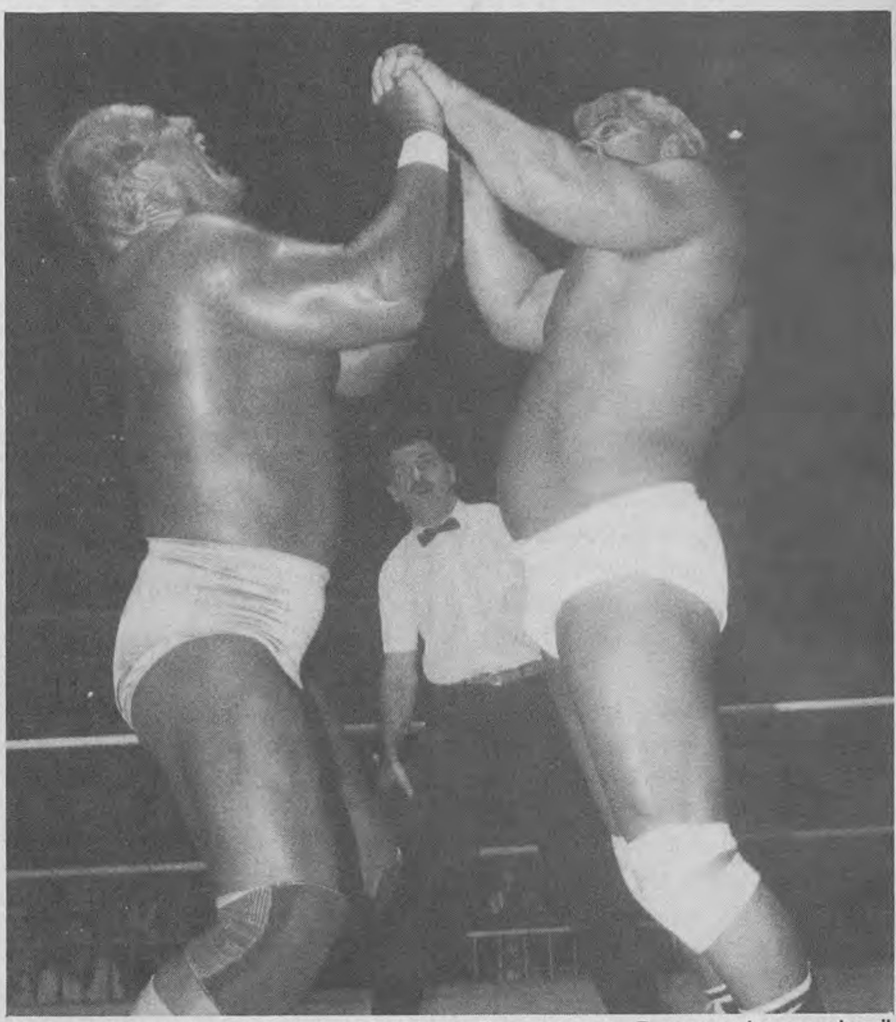
If only Hogan could say the same.

In January, Bravo held Hogan in a bearhug for 10 excruciating minutes, finally dropping "The Hulkster" to the canvas in a lifeless heap. Hogan was carried from the ring on a stretcher.

It was not the first time Hogan had been injured. Many times in the past he has required assistance from the ring, and in every rematch he took his revenge in thundering, pulverizing fashion. Hogan taught intensely painful lessons to wrestlers bold enough to challenge him.

Bravo is still waiting for the first day of school.

In their rematch, Bravo did what dozens of wrestlers before him could not: He thrashed the unthrashable Hulk Hogan a *sec-*



**Hogan and Bravo engage in a test of strength. Five years ago, Bravo was known primarily as an aerial wrestler. Now, his added muscle and bulk make him one of the most dangerous power grapplers in the sport.**

*ond* time! With his fans shouting encouragement from the balconies, Bravo went through Hogan like a chainsaw through plywood. He battered the blond giant into pitiable submission.

*"Bravo,* Bravo!" the Canadian fans still loyal to their native son applauded. "Wait till Hogan gets the title. Then it will be ours!"

Hogan's unwillingness to grant Bravo a title match when he reigned as WWF kingpin is common knowledge among Canadian wrestling fans. Basing their hopes on Bravo's recent domination of Hogan, local fans prayed for the ex-champ's success at WrestleMania V; they figured that if he recaptured the belt, he'd have no choice but to finally grant Bravo a title shot.

"You know, all his loud boasts and his association with that goofball manager Frenchy Martin don't make Bravo many friends," said ex-partner DeNucci. "But it shouldn't diminish what he's accomplished. When we wrestled together, he always complained that his size kept him from getting title shots. Wrestlers talk all the time about getting bigger and faster. For Hogan to put two inches on his arms is no big deal; he's already a muscleman. But Bravo was an acrobat, a flyer. Wrestlers like him don't often become musclemen.

"Maybe he's lost a little speed," DeNucci continued. "Maybe. But I don't think anyone in any sport has put on the bulk the way Bravo has. Five years ago he never lifted a weight. Today he is a world-class weightlifter. He's stronger, faster, smarter, and has more experience than Hogan. He's the WWF's best-kept secret. But if Hogan should regain his crown and be fool enough to give Dino a crack at it, he will be a secret no more. Hulk Hogan cannot beat Dino Bravo—not now, not ever."

DeNucci may be right. □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(Continued from page 20)

"All I ever needed to know about protecting myself I learned from my father," said Cameron. "He's the one who was my biggest inspiration in becoming a pro wrestler. He's still around, and even after all my training, he could probably *still* give me the whipping of my life."

Cameron went on to a brilliant college football career at Alcorn State University in Mississippi. He earned all-Conference designation as a linebacker from 1976 through 1979, and caught the eye of NFL scouts. He played with the Denver Broncos and with two Canadian Football League teams before becoming bored with the gridiron.

"It wasn't rough enough for me," claimed Cameron. "It got a little boring getting penalties all the time, so I quit and took up bodybuilding. That was *really* monotonous, even though I won the Mr. North Country and Mr. Minnesota titles in 1985. I needed something where I could start hammering on people again. Wrestling seemed like my best bet for happiness, and I decided to get the best trainer I could find."

Cameron contacted Eddie Sharkey, one of the sport's top trainers who also was instrumental in building the careers of The Road Warriors. Under Sharkey's guidance, Cameron became a pro after only a few weeks of training.

"I'll never forget my first pro match," recalled Cameron. "I crushed a punk called Johnny Love at a little place called George's Nightclub in Minneapolis back in 1986. Hey, no shame startin' in a bar—my old man used to make a living fighting in gin mills. A few weeks after that, I won my first title, the Pro Wrestling American belt, from Ricky Rice."

**Matt Borne has little hope of prevailing in this test of strength against Cameron. Stampede fans have been shocked by Cameron's viciousness in the ring, and many observers have already tabbed him as the most sadistic man in the sport today.**

Cameron next moved on to the Windy City territory, where he gained experience under the guidance of Dangerously. He came close to winning the Windy City title from Steve Regal several times last year, but then he decided to investigate the Stampede area last December. Since that time, he's been terrorizing Davey Boy Smith and Chris Benoit with his unique brand of brutality. He's also now managed by the devious Ronald Trump.

"I'm here in Canada now, and that's where I'm staying," insists Cameron. "They reinstated Don Muraco as the North American champion, but Muraco's gonna be too crippled to wrestle once I get through with him. He thinks he's pretty tough, but that's only because he's never been in the ring with me. I may be a newcomer, but when I bust up and retire old man Muraco, *everybody's* gonna know who Larry Cameron is." □

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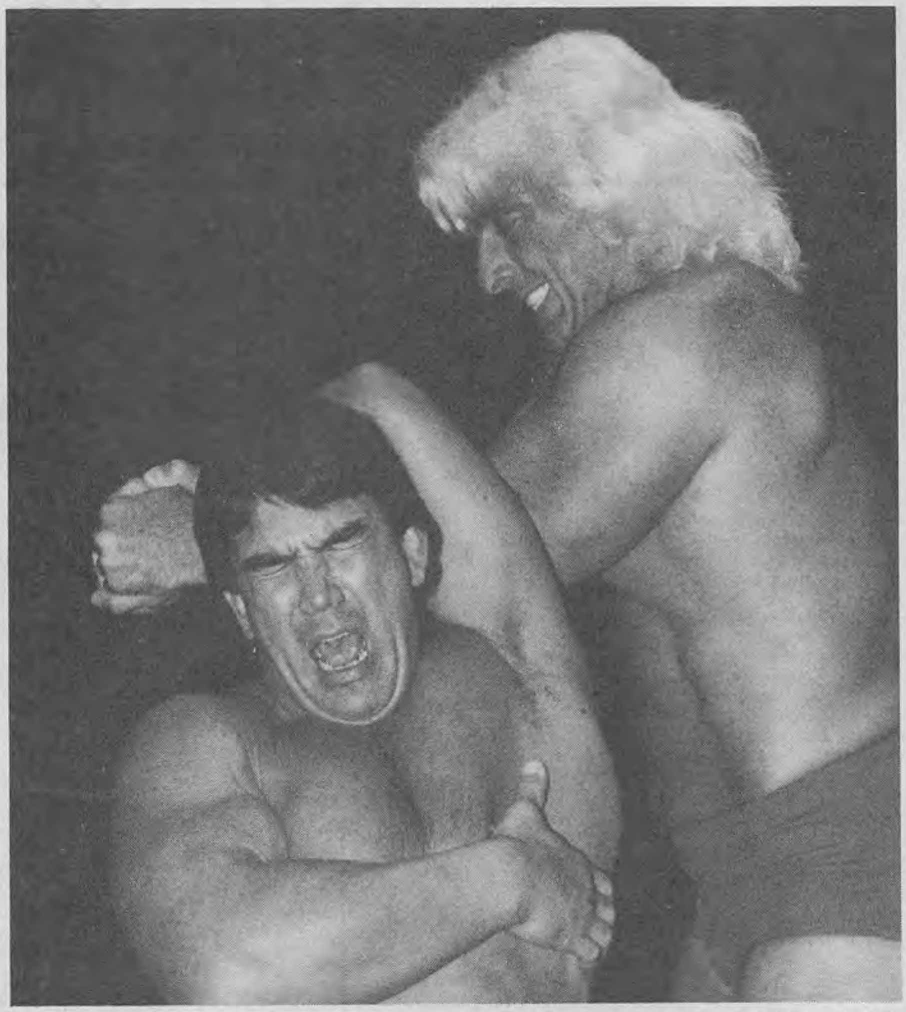
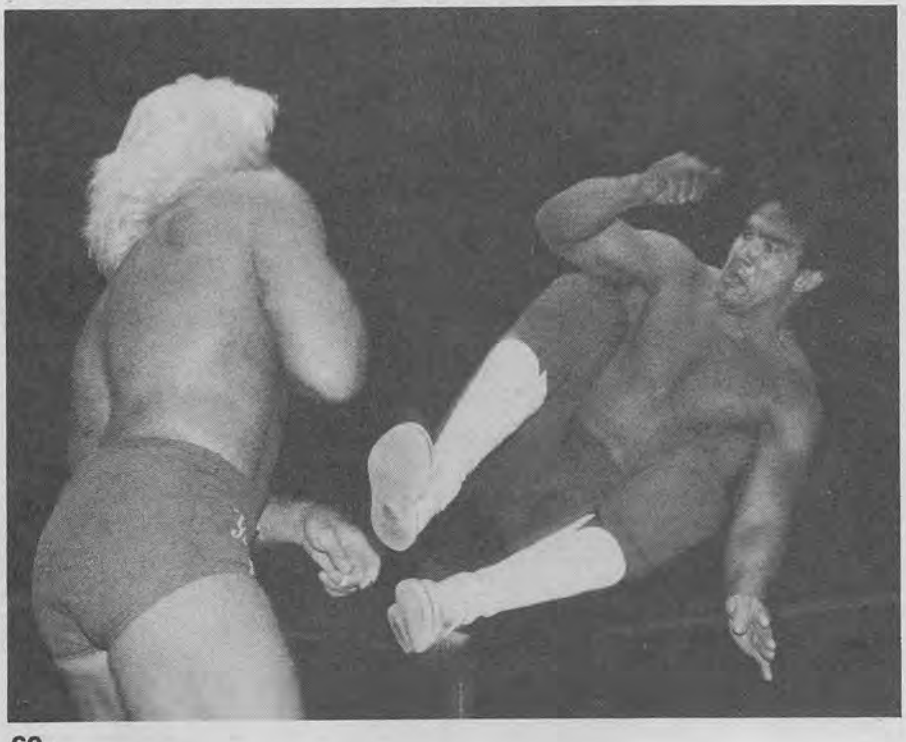
# FLAIR VS. STEAMBOAT

(Continued from page 37)



Flair bends Steamboat's arm behind his head (above) in an attempt to pull it right out of its socket. "The Dragon" dropkicks the former World champion (below). Flair doesn't just want the title back from Steamboat, he wants to cripple him!



at Chi-Town Rumble '89 on February 20. Steamboat surprised the five-time World champion by rolling him up in a small package to win the match and the NWA World title. Flair has responded to the loss by becoming more sadistic than ever. He wants to regain his belt, but he has another goal: He wants to tear apart Steamboat's legs with his figure-four leglock.

On March 7 in Atlanta, Flair returned to action by using his favorite finishing maneuver to fracture the right leg of rookie Greg Evans during a broadcast of TBS' *World Championship Wrestling*. Flair claimed his maiming of the young wrestler was a statement to the new champion.

"Rick is better suited to doing dishes with the wife than he is to defending a title," Flair sneered. "I'm gonna show the world that the 'Nature Boy' is still the meanest, nastiest son of a gun anywhere. I won't stop busting legs until I do it to that homespun Hawaiian and get back what's rightfully mine. It's clear that he's positively frightened of me now. Why else would he run off to Japan right after winning the title?"

These comments were an obvious attempt to rile Steamboat—and they apparently worked. When Steamboat returned from a successful week-long tour of Japan in early March, he was as angry as he could possibly be.

"Flair is nothing but a liar," Steamboat fumed. "I'm sick of him putting down my family all the time. My home life is none of his business. If he wants to live a fast-lane lifestyle, that's his privilege, but he can't say anything bad about my wife and son and get away with it. By the way, the Japanese tour was intended for the NWA World champion; those bookings were originally *his*. I just happened to win the belt right before the tour took place. I can't stand it when he lies like that."

Flair's game plan of incensing the champion has worked to his advantage. Steamboat has made more mistakes than usual during their recent matches. It appears that Steamboat

may be more intent on defending the honor of his family than in defending his title. According to Flair, once Steamboat's will is worn down, he'll be more susceptible to being beaten—and crippled.

"Flair talks a great game, but he's full of it," Steamboat said after a recent match. "He got his figure-four on me tonight, but he didn't do a whole lot of damage, did he? By now, the fans should know that all this talk about how he's going to break my legs is just a lot of hot air. His star is fading fast, and *he's* the one who'll be hurt before this is over."

**The "Nature Boy" pulls Steamboat toward him by the hair. Flair says he has Steamboat rattled, but the champion insists it's the other way around. This is a psychological battle as much as a physical one.**

Since that match, Flair has been working out at his home, perfecting his figure-four with Barry Windham and manager Hiro Matsuda. Reportedly, Matsuda's Yamasaki Corporation is paying wary sparring partners a whopping $2,500 per day to agree to be locked in Flair's vise-like hold. Flair is trying to make his version of the hold the most deadly weapon ever seen in the sport.

"Phase one is complete—I've definitely got Steamboat distracted," Flair insists. "Now, when the time is right, I'll put my new, double-deadly leglock on him. The next thing you know, I'll be wearing the belt while he's going through physical therapy. I'll admit that Steamboat is one of the better men I've wrestled . . ."

Flair paused for a moment. He then let out an evil laugh.

". . . but he'll be the first World champion I've ever crippled." □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# CORRESPONDENTS REPORTS

(Continued from page 16)

as Regal and Brunzell traded hold for hold. Finally, Brunzell got the upper hand as he went from a side headlock to a front facelock to a monkey flip. When he attempted a second monkey flip, though, Regal reversed it with a spinecrusher. Brunzell looked stunned.

Immediately, Regal stopped

**Windy City champion Steve Regal recently defended his title against former WWF and AWA star Jim Brunzell.**

wrestling by the rules and began raking Brunzell's eyes. He then raked his face across the top rope. Although he could barely see, Brunzell stopped Regal cold with a forearm uppercut to the jaw and quickly followed up with a figure-four leglock. Regal broke the hold by grabbing the ropes. When Brunzell tried a stepover toehold, Regal again reached for the ropes.

It looked as though Regal knew he was in trouble. He stunned Brunzell with a desperation punch to the neck, then threw him out of the ring. As Brunzell lay on the floor of the auditorium, Regal had time to catch his breath and regain his composure.

Regal then ran out of the ring after Brunzell and slammed his shoulder into the steel ringpost. As Brunzell tried to enter the ring, Regal grabbed him and dropped him throat-first on the top rope.

Still outside the ring, Brunzell grabbed Regal's legs and slammed his knee into the ringpost. While getting back in the ring, Brunzell kneed Regal in the face, then slapped on the sleeperhold.

Regal began to get weary. As the referee checked to see if he was conscious, Regal threw him into Brunzell. Regal was disqualified, thereby keeping the title.

In other bouts: The Terminators defeated Doug Somers & Buddy Rose . . . The Dazzler beat "Awesome" Ondi Austin . . . The Mighty Thor wrestled Dave Kaspar to a no-contest . . . Frank "The Tank" Melson defeated Curly Rich.

**Portland, OR *(Correspondent—Rudy Mantegna):*** In a battle of former tag team partners at the Portland Sports Arena, Scott Petersen squared off against Steve Doll.

Now enemies, Petersen and Doll once wrestled together as The Southern Rockers. Scotty "The Body" was at ringside because he was interested in watching both men. In fact, it was Scotty who instigated the trouble between Petersen and Doll in the first place: Scotty had tried to convince Petersen that the fans thought Doll was responsible for the team's success.

The way Petersen and Doll went at it, you would never know they were once partners. From the opening bell, they attacked each other with shocking fury. The violence was especially saddening for those Pacific Northwest fans who cheered the Rockers

**Scott Petersen and Steve Doll stare each other down before their match. Former partners, they split up in large part because of Scotty "The Body's" meddling.**

when they battled PNW's rulebreakers.

Scotty, of course, got involved in the bout. He tripped Petersen, but then blamed it on Rex King, who was also at ringside; King was there to make sure that Scotty didn't bother Doll.

Eventually, Petersen made a comeback. He pinned Doll, then walked back to the dressing room with Scotty, whose devious plan for victory had worked.

In other bouts: King defeated Scotty by countout . . . "Beetlejuice" Art Barr pinned Matt Borne . . . Carl Styles, Jonathan Boyd, & Brian Adams defeated The Grappler, Nord the Barbarian, & Buddy Rose when Rose submitted to Styles' full-nelson.☐

## YOU ASKED US

*(Continued from page 18)*

**Rick's gonna get that TV title back from Mike Rotundo. We'll get the final laugh on those Varsity Club goons."**

***

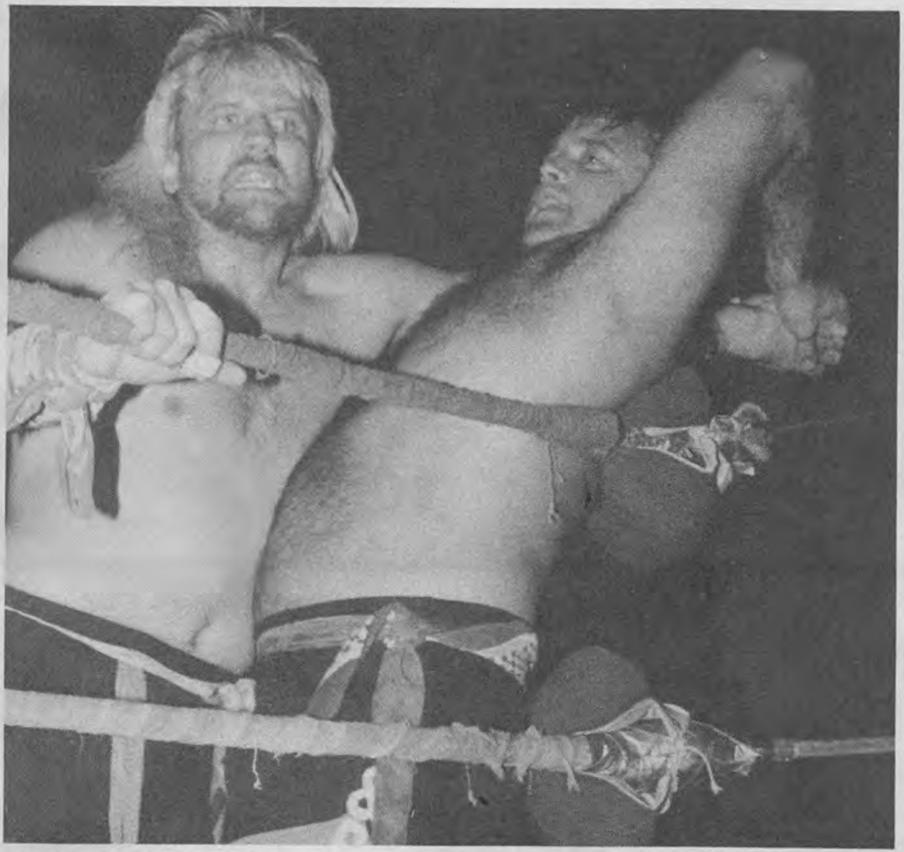
Q: "Why in the world did One Man Gang become Akeem? Slick has turned a nasty wrestling machine into a buffoon."—Jane Adamo, Newark, NJ

A: **"It's sad, isn't it?" asked Assistant Editor Bob Smith. "One Man Gang was not the most decent man in the sport, but he was big, strong, and determined. As OMG, he was UWF heavyweight champion. Then he came to the WWF and it was all downhill. His first mistake was in allowing Slick to manage him. Only Slick could have come up with the bizarre idea of turning OMG into Akeem. Now Akeem is just as dangerous as he ever was, but opponents can't help but laugh at him. He doesn't intimidate anymore."**

***

Q: "I have a question for Rick Morton: Recently, you had a match against Robert Gibson, your partner in The Rock 'n' Roll Express. How did it feel to wrestle a man you had been teaming with for so many years?"—Barry Hall, Augusta, ME

A: **"Well, it was definitely one of the hardest things I've ever done," Morton said, "and I've fought some pretty tough matches over my career. Me and Robby have been like brothers since the beginning. We were kind of forced into that situation by Jerry Lawler. He takes all the credit for inventing the Rock 'n' Roll Express idea, but he's a liar as usual. The Rock 'n' Rolls are what they are today because of me and Ricky. We're not through with Lawler in the ring, either."** □



Rick Morton corners his Rock 'n' Roll Express partner Robert Gibson. Morton wrestled his friend recently, and says it was one of the hardest things he's ever done.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# THE Wrestler

*Rick Steamboat*

## TOP 10

1. **RICK STEAMBOAT** — *238, Honolulu, HI* — **NWA World champion**
2. **RANDY SAVAGE** — *245, Sarasota, FL* — **WWF World champion**
3. **RIC FLAIR** — *243, Minneapolis, MN* — **No. 2 contender: NWA title**
4. **HULK HOGAN** — *302, Venice Beach, CA* — **No. 2 contender: WWF title**
5. **LEX LUGER** — *268, Chicago, IL* — **U.S. heavyweight champion**
6. **THE ULTIMATE WARRIOR** — *280, Queens, NY* — **WWF Intercontinental champion**
7. **LARRY ZBYSZKO** — *248, Pittsburgh, PA* — **AWA World champion**
8. **STING** — *260, Venice Beach, CA* — **NWA TV champion**
9. **BARRY WINDHAM** — *263, Sweetwater, TX* — **No. 1 contender: U.S. title**
10. **JERRY LAWLER** — *234, Memphis, TN* — **World Class champion**

## TAG TEAMS

1. **THE ROAD WARRIORS** — *Combined weight: 567 pounds* — **NWA World tag team champions**
2. **DEMOLITION** — *Combined weight: 585 pounds* — **WWF World tag team champions**
3. **WARLORD & BARBARIAN** — *Combined weight: 655 pounds* — **No. 1 contenders: WWF tag team title**
4. **THE SAMOAN SWAT TEAM** — *Combined weight: 510 pounds* — **No. 2 contenders: NWA tag team title**
5. **RICK STEINER & EDDIE GILBERT** — *Combined weight: 470 pounds* — **U.S. tag team champions**
6. **TULLY BLANCHARD & ARN ANDERSON** — *Combined weight: 484 pounds* — **No. 2 contenders: WWF tag team title**
7. **THE ROCKERS** — *Combined weight: 461 pounds* — **No. 3 contenders: WWF tag team title**
8. **KEN PATERA & BRAD RHEINGANS** — *Combined weight: 504 pounds* — **AWA World tag team champions**
9. **MIKE ROTUNDO & STEVE WILLIAMS** — *Combined weight: 510 pounds* — **No. 1 contenders: U.S. tag team title**
10. **KERRY VON ERICH & JEFF JARRETT** — *Combined weight: 460 pounds* — **World Class tag team champions**

## NWA

***World Champion:***
**RICK STEAMBOAT**
*238, Honolulu, HI*

1—**LEX LUGER** — *268, Chicago, IL*
2—**RIC FLAIR** — *243, Minneapolis, MN*
3—**STING** — *260, Venice Beach, CA*
4—**BARRY WINDHAM** — *263, Sweetwater, TX*
5—**MIKE ROTUNDO** — *245, Syracuse, NY*
6—**RICK STEINER** — *248, Detroit, MI*
7—**BUTCH REED** — *265, Kansas City, MO*
8—**THE IRON SHEIK** — *262, Teheran, Iran*
9—**MICHAEL HAYES** — *255, Marietta, GA*
10—**EDDIE GILBERT** — *222, Lexington, TN*

## WWF

***World Champion:***
**RANDY SAVAGE**
*245, Sarasota, FL*

1—**THE ULTIMATE WARRIOR** — *280, Queens, NY*
2—**HULK HOGAN** — *302, Venice Beach, CA*
3—**BIG BOSSMAN** — *348, Cobb County, GA*
4—**BAD NEWS BROWN** — *280, New York, NY*
5—**TED DiBIASE** — *247, Omaha, NB*
6—**HACKSAW DUGGAN** — *280, Glens Falls, NY*
7—**DINO BRAVO** — *256, Montreal, Quebec*
8—**ANDRE THE GIANT** — *497, Grenoble, France*
9—**AKEEM** — *468, Chicago, IL*
10—**CURT HENNIG** — *235, Minneapolis, MN*

## AWA

***World Champion:***
**LARRY ZBYSZKO**
*248, Pittsburgh, PA*

1—**GREG GAGNE** — *220, Robbinsdale, MN*
2—**TOM ZENK** — *237, Minneapolis, MN*
3—**WAHOO McDANIEL** — *280, Midland, TX*
4—**SGT. SLAUGHTER** — *310, Parris Island, SC*
5—**KEN PATERA** — *256, Portland, OR*
6—**MANNY FERNANDEZ** — *245, El Paso, TX*
7—**COL. DeBEERS** — *248, Cape Town, South Africa*
8—**TOMMY RICH** — *248, Hendersonville, TN*
9—**DERRICK DUKES** — *235, Boston, MA*
10—**JIM GARVIN** — *235, Tampa, FL*

## WORLD CLASS

***World Class Champion:***
**JERRY LAWLER**
*234, Memphis, TN*

1—**GARY YOUNG** — *240, Houston, TX*
2—**KERRY VON ERICH** — *260, Denton, TX*
3—**BRICKHOUSE BROWN** — *225, Winter Haven, FL*
4—**JEFF JARRETT** — *200, Hendersonville, TN*
5—**KEVIN VON ERICH** — *235, Denton, TX*
6—**CACTUS JACK** — *242, Truth or Consequences, NM*
7—**JIMMY JACK FUNK** — *243, Portland, OR*
8—**ICEMAN PARSONS** — *245, St. Louis, MO*
9—**CHRIS ADAMS** — *228, Stratford, England*
10—**ROBERT FULLER** — *257, Dyresburg, TN*

# OFFICIAL RATINGS

*Top 10 and Tag Team ratings are based on won-lost records for the past month, quality of opposition, and inherent skill of each wrestler or team. These ratings are compiled by the magazine's editorial board. Most Popular and Most Hated ratings are based on nationwide telephone and arena surveys of wrestling fans and on the volume and character of mail that comes to our offices. All other ratings are based on the official current positions of challengers to the top title in each category; certain titleholders receive an automatic spot in the ratings.*

## MOST POPULAR

1. **HULK HOGAN** — *302, Venice Beach, CA* — **Last month: No. 1 Most Popular**
2. **STING** — *260, Venice Beach, CA* — **Last month: No. 4 Most Popular**
3. **THE ULTIMATE WARRIOR** — *280, Queens, NY* — **Last month: No. 3 Most Popular**
4. **RICK STEAMBOAT** — *238, Honolulu, HI* — **Last month: No. 2 Most Popular**
5. **LEX LUGER** — *268, Chicago, IL* — **Last month: No. 5 Most Popular**
6. **RICK STEINER** — *248, Detroit, MI* — **Last month: No. 6 Most Popular**
7. **HACKSAW DUGGAN** — *280, Glens Falls, NY* — **Last month: unrated**
8. **DUSTY RHODES** — *302, Austin, TX* — **Last month: No. 10 Most Popular**
9. **JEFF JARRETT** — *200, Hendersonville, TN* — **Last month: No. 9 Most Popular**
10. **JERRY LAWLER** — *234, Memphis, TN* — **Last month: unrated**

## MOST HATED

1. **RANDY SAVAGE** — *245, Sarasota, FL* — **Last month: No. 1 Most Hated**
2. **RIC FLAIR** — *243, Minneapolis, MN* — **Last month: No. 2 Most Hated**
3. **BIG BOSSMAN** — *348, Cobb County, GA* — **Last month: No. 3 Most Hated**
4. **BARRY WINDHAM** — *263, Sweetwater, TX* — **Last month: No. 4 Most Hated**
5. **AKEEM** — *468, Chicago, IL* — **Last month: No. 5 Most Hated**
6. **ANDRE THE GIANT** — *497, Grenoble, France* — **Last month: No. 6 Most Hated**
7. **LARRY ZBYSZKO** — *248, Pittsburgh, PA* — **Last month: No. 9 Most Hated**
8. **MIKE ROTUNDO** — *245, Syracuse, NY* — **Last month: No. 7 Most Hated**
9. **MICHAEL HAYES** — *255, Marietta, GA* — **Last month: No. 8 Most Popular**
10. **RICK RUDE** — *246, Robbinsdale, MN* — **Last month: No. 8 Most Hated**

**For period ended March 31, 1989**

## CUMULATIVE RATINGS

*These ratings are based on the past 10 issues of this magazine. We have examined our ratings for each of those issues—in our Top 10 and Tag Team categories only—and assigned each position a point value: 10 points for a number-one rating, nine for a number-two ranking, and so on down to one point for a number-10 rating. The point values for all wrestlers in the past 10 issues have been compiled, allowing a maximum of 100 points. Each issue we'll present the top five finishers in each category. While our regular ratings reflect the past month, these cumulative ratings give an indication of wider trends in the sport.*

### SINGLES

1—RANDY SAVAGE .......... 98 points
2—RIC FLAIR .......... 88 points
3—JERRY LAWLER .......... 68 points
4—LEX LUGER .......... 61 points
5—BARRY WINDHAM .......... 42 points

### TAG TEAMS

1—THE ROAD WARRIORS .......... 91 points
2—DEMOLITION .......... 89 points
3—STAN LANE & BOBBY EATON .......... 68 points
4—PAT TANAKA & PAUL DIAMOND .......... 55 points
5—WARLORD & BARBARIAN .......... 54 points

## STAMPEDE

***North American Champion:***
**DAVEY BOY SMITH**
*245, Leeds, England*

1—**CHRIS BENOIT** *218, Edmonton, Alberta*
2—**LARRY CAMERON** *280, Chicago*
3—**JOHNNY SMITH** *235, Manchester, England*
4—**HARLEY RACE** *268, Kansas City, MO*
5—**MAKHAN SINGH** *380, Saginaw, MI*
6—**BRIAN PILLMAN** *226, Cincinnati, OH*
7—**GAMA SINGH** *220, Karachi, Pakistan*
8—**BRUCE HART** *211, Calgary, Alberta*
9—**STEVE BLACKMAN** *270, Philadelphia, PA*
10—**DYNAMITE KID** *228, Manchester, England*

## CWA

***CWA Champion:***
**JEFF JARRETT**
*200, Hendersonville, TN*

1—**JERRY LAWLER** *234, Memphis, TN*
2—**DUTCH MANTEL** *224, Oil Trough, TX*
3—**FRANK LANCASTER** *239, Atlanta, GA*
4—**BILL DUNDEE** *214, Melbourne, Australia*
5—**TRACY SMOTHERS** *228, Springfield, TN*
6—**THE MASTER OF PAIN** *320, parts unknown*
7—**ROBERT FULLER** *257, Dyresburg, TN*
8—**TOMMY RICH** *248, Hendersonville, TN*
9—**PHIL HICKERSON** *208, Memphis, TN*
10—**PERRY JACKSON** *280, Ft. Bragg, NC*

## CONTINENTAL

***Continental Champion:***
**TOM PRICHARD**
*220, Houston, TX*

1—**DAN DAVIS** *238, Nashville, TN*
2—**WENDELL COOLEY** *220, Milton, FL*
3—**BILL DUNDEE** *214, Melbourne, AUS*
4—**TERRY GORDY** *289, Chattanooga, TN*
5—**TONY ANTHONY** *235, Bucksnorth, TN*
6—**MIKE DAVIS** *240, Atlanta, GA*
7—**DOUG FURNAS** *265, Commerce, OK*
8—**RON FULLER** *235, Dyresburg, TN*
9—**JACKIE FULTON** *225, Columbus, OH*
10—**DON HARRIS** *285, Nashville, TN*

## SCW

***SCW Champion:***
**TITLE VACANT**
*(See "Ratings Analysis")*

1—**RON STARR** *245, San Juan, PR*
2—**MR. WRESTLING II** *232, Atlanta, GA*
3—**JOEL DEATON** *251, Tyler, TX*
4—**TOMMY RICH** *248, Hendersonville, TN*
5—**NICK BUSICH** *268, Pittsburgh, PA*
6—**STEVE LAWLER** *230, parts unknown*
7—**DINO MINELLI** *242, Miami, FL*
8—**DAVID SAMMARTINO** *240, Pittsburgh, PA*
9—**CHICK DONOVAN** *233, LeGrange, GA*
10—**STEVE PRITCHARD** *220, Cumming, GA*

# RATINGS ANALYSIS

**Every month, this column will tell fans how we go about rating more than 135 wrestlers in 12 different categories. It is a behind-the-scenes look at the most important—and respected—ratings system in the sport. This column is vital reading for all wrestling fans.**

***A new number one!*** This is only the second issue since **Rick Steamboat** won the NWA World title from **Ric Flair**, and already he's vaulted into the top spot in our Top 10 ratings. Steamboat, who won the title from **Ric Flair** on February 20 in Chicago, has defended his belt in Japan and defeated Flair in several U.S. defenses.

*Hulk Hogan*

This shouldn't, however, be taken as a knock against Savage, who continues to defend his title against all top WWF contenders. But when was the last time a WWF champion went overseas? Savage was also on the edge at press time. His big title match with **Hulk Hogan** was only days away.

Savage had been number one for eight consecutive months. Steamboat does not appear in our cumulative ratings, as he has accumulated only 19 points over the past 10 months.

***Tracking Trends.*** If the Top 10 ratings look familiar, they should. There are no new entrants from last month, and little movement: Steamboat moved to one, Savage moved to two, **Barry Windham** dropped two notches to number nine, AWA World champ **Larry Zbyszko** moved up three spots to number seven, and World Class champ **Jerry Lawler** dropped a notch to number 10.

Has power taken over in pro wrestling? Don't scientific ability and finesse mean anything anymore? Take a look at our tag team ratings and you'll have the answers to these questions. For the third straight month, power merchants **The Road Warriors**, **Demolition**, and **Warlord** and **Barbarian**, hold the one-two-three spots. Each team relies heavily on strength, power, and intimidation.

But after **The Samoan Swat Team** (up four spots to number four), each team in the ratings has a well-rounded scientific and/or aerial attack: **Rick Steiner** and **Eddie Gilbert** (up two spots to number five); **Tully Blanchard** and **Arn Anderson** (up three spots to number nine); **The Rockers** (entering at number seven); new AWA World champions **Ken Patera** and **Brad Rheingans; Mike Rotundo** and **Steve Williams**; and new World Class tag champs **Kerry Von Erich** and **Jeff Jarrett.**

***Mail call!*** It's been a while since we've printed any reader mail, but an interesting letter arrived from John Ready of Sarasota, Florida, who wrote: *I understand the concept behind your cumulative ratings and it makes a lot of sense. It's true that greatness isn't determined over 30 days, but there's one thing you didn't mention: Greatness isn't determined over 10 months, either. It takes a lot longer than that, I'd say as much as 10 years before a wrestler is worthy of being called great. For that reason, I'd call Ric Flair great, but I wouldn't say the same about Hulk Hogan.*

*Ric Flair*

*In other words, cumulative ratings only go a little further than your monthly ratings, and not really far enough. I'm not saying that you should print cumulative ratings for the last decade. I'm just saying that the only way to measure greatness—which is hard to measure in the first place—is by simply following the sport for a long period of time and then making your own decision. Some things you just can't put a number on.*

***More ratings!*** Beginning next month in *The Wrestler*, there'll be more federations covered on our ratings pages than ever before. We're doing away with the revolving ratings category and making room, in abbreviated form, for several other federations, including the FCW, ICW, PNW, WWC, and others. Although final plans have not been made, there figure to be 11 or more federations—plus Top 10, Tag Teams, Most Hated, and Most Popular—on our ratings pages—*every month!*

*Tommy Rich*

***One last time!*** Southern Championship Wrestling is the final entrant in our revolving ratings category. This independent promotion, operating out of Georgia, has no champion at this time. The most recent champ, **John Michaels**, vacated the title so he could co-host *Pro Wrestling This Week.* Those are strange priorities for a wrestler, to say the least, but there are several other worthy competitors in the federation, including **Mr. Wrestling II**, **Tommy Rich**, and **Ron Starr.**

***Till next time*** . . . when we revamp the ratings pages, we're looking forward to hearing what's on your mind. The address for mail is: "Ratings Analysis," c/o *The Wrestler;* Box 48; Rockville Centre, NY 11571. □

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